MAYOR OF WIND-GAP

AND

CANVASSING.

BY THE O'HARA FAMILY.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. III.

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CANVASSING.

CHAPTER I.

After breakfast, next morning, Mr. Barham set off grouse-shooting, escorted by Pat Murphy; and Mr. Mc Alpine remained at home to talk sentiment and read Lord Byron to Isabel; Mr. Wilmot and Lord Warringdon were just mounting their horses on their canvassing expedition; and Isabel was standing at the window, ostensibly to admire her father's Arab, which was prancing and curvetting with all the vanity of conscious beauty, never suspecting that part, at least, of the admiration he excited was owing to the chance of his having that day for his rider

his master's guest, rather than his master himself.

Lord Warringdon looked up at the window, and smiled when he saw Isabel, "Wish me success," cried he, as he kissed his hand, and rode off.

"Come away from the window, my dear!" said Lady Anne. "Lord Warringdon can mount his horse, I suppose, without your superintendence. I must say, I never saw such conduct in any young woman, circumstanced as you are;—engaged, I may say, to one man, and yet carrying on a flirtation with another. I really have not patience with such want of sense, and want of honour. I have not the slightest doubt that Mc Alpine would have proposed for you last night, had you behaved with common decency; but just as he was making up his mind to speak, you set on foot a trashy conversation with Lord Warringdon, who has no more serious intentions about you than he has about me; he is just laughing at you,—*that* you may rely upon. Maria," said she, turning to her other daughter, "I shall be obliged by your talking to your sister on this business; perhaps you may have more

influence on her than I have." And so saying she quitted the room with an air of displeasure.

"I am a miserable creature!" exclaimed Isabel.

"Because mamma won't let you look out of the window at Lord Warringdon?" asked her sister, laughing.

Isabel coloured. "I care very little about Lord Warringdon, as it happens," said she, in a tone of disdain. It is not necessary, I suppose, to be in love with him, in order to be miserable at the thought of being forced to marry Mc Alpine. Maria, if you knew how I loathe this horrid Mc Alpine, I am sure you would pity me,—even mamma would. I will tell her that I really cannot marry him; shall I, Maria?"

"Why, as for that, I don't see what use there would be in any such avowal. You know she made poor Louisa marry a man old enough to be her grand-father; and that all Louisa's protestations of disgust were nothing in the balance against fifty thousand per annum, and a peerage. The grand object of mamma's life has been, you know, to

marry her daughters advantageously. We may break our hearts (such of us as have one) afterwards, if we like,—that will not be her fault, but ours; she does her duty, she gets us good matches, and leaves all the rest, like a good christian, to Providence. It would be, therefore, quite useless to tell her that you dislike Mc Alpine; she knows, already, that you do. To avoid marrying him, you must marry somebody else; that is your only chance of escape."

"Heaven help me! I have none, then," exclaimed Isabel, despairingly.

"Yes, you have;" replied Maria, who feared driving her sister to utter desperation. Yes, you have a chance, and a brilliant one. I am sure Lord Warringdon admires you: whether he is sufficiently *épris* to marry you, is another story:—try what you can effect with him,—but take care that mamma shall see nothing of your proceedings, or she would stop you at once; for she fears losing Mc Alpine, and not succeeding with Warringdon. Besides, to tell you the truth, she has taken it into her head, that the admiration is rather on your side than his, and that you may make yourself ridiculous, and ——"

"I am really much indebted to her, for her flattering estimation of me," interrupted Isabel, highly affronted; "I am not quite mean enough to fall in love with a man who cares nothing about me; nor silly enough to fancy he does, if he really does not.—Maria, too, sees that he admires me," thought she to herself; "my wishes have not, then, quite deceived me, and I *have* a hope, not only of escaping Mc Alpine, but of securing the only man I ever really loved."

Isabel did not give utterance to these thoughts. There never had existed between the sisters that habit of confidence on every subject which forms the chief bond of love between sisters in general. They lived together, indeed, rather on the footing of intimate companions than of trusting and trusted friends; neither of them, however, being deficient in affection for the other. They liked one another better than any other women of their acquaintance; they laughed or reasoned together as the case might be; but they seldom talked. And, perhaps, this constraint was natural between two persons whose ways of thinking were so dissimilar. Isabel, how-

ever, we must add, felt more cautious of Maria than Maria of her. Maria would much oftener speak of her "designs," as she called them, than Isabel of her attachments. But although, on the present occasion, Isabel hid her secret thoughts from her sister, Maria, who had a portion of her mother's power of divination, saw what was passing in mind;—saw that her own hint about Lord Warringdon was extremely acceptable, and would be forthwith acted upon. Nor had Isabel ever before thought so highly of Maria's good sense and penetration as she now did. Aware, however, of Maria's objection to "love talk," she changed the subject to one more interesting to her sister.

"What sort of a young man is Mr. Barham?"

"Quite a fool," replied Maria, composedly.

"I wonder, then, Maria, why you should waste your time talking to him."

"I do not waste my time at all;—I put it out to the best interest imaginable,—cent. per cent., or rather, thousand per cent. He has eighteen thousand a year, and a fine place in Leicestershire."

"Yes, but what is his fine place to us?"

"His fine place is nothing to either of us, at present, I grant you; it never *will* be any thing to you, I know, inasmuch as you strike at nobler quarry;—but it will be a great deal, I expect, to me."

"Why, Maria, you surely would not marry that silly boy?"

"Wouldn't I? *naboklish*,* as Father John says; I wish, my dear, I had the refusing of him, if he was twice the fool he is,—a difficult thing, by the bye."

"Dear Maria, how can you, with your strength and variety of intellect, seriously contemplate marrying an idiot?"

"Isabel," said Maria, for once in her life speaking with emotion, "what has this intellect you talk of effected for me? have not all the pretty fools, or ugly heiresses, who started into life with me, been married before me? Show me the man who marries a woman *because* she has intellect. He may forgive it in a pretty woman,—he certainly will in a rich one,—but she who is neither wealthy nor

* Never mind.

handsome, and yet possesses it, how does she fare?"

"Why, my dear Maria, I never met a clever man yet who did not say that he preferred your conversation to that of all the women he knew."

"Psha, my dear Isabel, what care I about their preferring my conversation? do they prefer myself? Let us come to the point,—which of them has proposed for me? for, after all, disguise the thing as we please, that is the grand object to which our perfections of any kind, and the admiration they excite, naturally tend. You remember the Frenchman who, whenever he heard of a beautiful poem, or heroic action, used to say, '*Tout cela, depuis le Marechal de France, jusqu'au Saretien, se fait indubitablement pour avoir de quoi mettre dans la bouche, et accomplir les lois de la mastication selon moi, est le vrai resultat des choses les plus rares de ce monde.*' Now, for 'mastication,' read 'marriage,' and the Frenchman's opinions are mine. Does an empty compliment on my talents repay me, think you, for the trouble I have taken in cultivating them? Clever men '*converse*" with me, 'tis true, but they make

love to others, and, what is wore, marry them. So that I have long ago seen that mere cleverness would never answer; and, from the moment I became sure of *that*, I began to say and do strange, sometimes startling, things, till I made them call me odd, in London; and till I was followed by all the fools about town, whom my reputation for mere talent had, in the first instance, frightened away. Well, I came home here; and here I play the buffoon, making people, like that poor silly Barham, laugh, in order to produce effect, in any way; so that, if I *do* marry, I shall owe my success, not to my talents, but to my absurdity;—not to my sense, but to my nonsense. No; my dear Isabel, credit me, talent is infinitely in a woman's way. What a pity I was not born a man, and in good stirring times; then I should have made Europe ring with my name; now, all my energies can get me nothing but a husband, and that husband a fool."

"Maria, you deserve a better fate than that," exclaimed Isabel, struck by the energy, misplaced as it was, of her sister's mind; and, suddenly perceiving the secret spring of actions, and of opinions, which had so often

puzzled her, in all her previous examinations of Maria's character.

"Bah!" said Maria, "one fate is as good as another, in the long run; a cloudy morning may change into a bright noon;—it may be very pleasant to be married to a fool, for any thing you or I know to the contrary; and, suppose it should not, why, in a hundred years time it will be all the same to me, whether I had been married to Lord Byron or Mr. Barham; or whether I had set the world in a blaze, like Helen, or Cleopatra; or had been shewn about at a fair, as a rival to the pig-faced lady. At the epoch I allude to, Mrs. Barham and Lady Warrington will look alike," continued she, playfully taking her sister by the chin: "A little courage is all that is necessary for any thing: do you not recollect how much easier it was, when we were both children, to persuade me to have a tooth out, than you? you would cry; and mamma would say, 'do, my sweet Isabel; you will be so much prettier, you know, when that ugly tooth is out, and that the others have room to range; and your mouth will be quite spoiled, if you keep it in; indeed, it

will, my pretty:' but, still you cried, and wrung your little hands, in an agony of indecision, as to which of the two apalling misfortunes you would prefer,—the pain of losing a tooth, or the horror of injuring your beauty."

Isabel laughed:—"Oh, yes, I remember all those pangs of mine so well! and you, on the contrary, used to submit, with the greatest apparent composure, to a similar operation."

"Yes, chiefly because I had no beauty to lose; and mamma needed only to remind me of all the inconvenience I had already suffered, from the aching tooth, and inform me of all that was yet in store for me; and how I should be kept awake all night by it, and, consequently, rendered unable to attend to my lessons in the morning; and that, then it was likely my cousin, little Anne Rochford, would get before me. This was enough—I made up my mind at once; for I could have better borne to have every tooth in my head dragged out, than to have let 'my cousin little Anne Rochford get before me.' And upon exactly such a principle, I have acted through life. When once convinced that a certain object is necessary to my welfare, I

aim at that object, steadily, unswervingly—there may be difficulties accompanying its pursuits—unpleasant, nay, painful ones; I disregard them; I overlook the means, and contemplate only the result. And, hearken, Isabel. I have applied this principle more especially to my matrimonial speculation. This instant, I would take *anybody* who could make *somebody* of me; for you know, as well as I do, that a woman who is not married is nobody. I heard my mother say this first: I looked about me, and saw that she was right —and I determined to marry, and become somebody as soon a possible. And my first stroke was for a distinguished marriage—but I was checked somewhat in my aspirations after distinction by overhearing the same lady deplore to my aunt, "how plain poor Maria was, and how sadly difficult it would be to marry her." Now, upon hearing this awkward fact, a girl of much sensibility, or mind, (as your adoring Mr. Mc Alpine might say,) would have gone to her room, and cried herself into fits—I acted more wisely. I asked mamma if any thing could supply the want of beauty in a girl? 'Yes,' answered she, 'ac-

complishments, fashion, and above all, knowledge of the world;' well, I worked away, day and night, at the accomplishments; and I studied human character carefully—and shall I tell you what has been the result of this latter branch of my pursuits? dislike and contempt of the men—disgust and contempt of the women."

"With such an opinion of society, I should be indifferent as to the place I was to occupy in it;" observed Isabel.

"Bad! bad logic, Isabel:" rejoined Maria, "ambition, whether its object be the acquisition of an empire, or of a husband, is yet in its nature pretty much the same. Cæsar had not, I dare say, a more favourable opinion of his fellows than I have, yet he spent a life to win a name amongst them. Perhaps this very contempt of your species encreases your desire for distinction; for, who can reconcile himself to be nothing in the eyes of those who are already nothing in his? But, to go on with my autobiography. I saw that, to attain my object, I must not boggle at a few disagreeable adjuncts—I determined, therefore, te take the first tolerable match that God

might send, and not be particular about a little folly or ugliness—old age or bad temper—I was not fastidious, you will acknowledge; yet; was I successful? I had sense, and I had not beauty—so alas! no one came a wooing to me. Oh, how I have moved heaven and earth to gain even Mc Alpine."

"Dear Maria," cried Isabel, "I wonder the very thought of him did not make you sick."

"I dare say it might have had that effect, if I had allowed myself to think at all about him, but I thought only on Mc Alpine castle, and ten thousand a year! a carriage and servants of my own; in fact, of an establishment! And that's the only way to manage on those occasions. Never allow yourself to think of the man at all, only of the fortune. And now, does not this *exposé* of my present position and future expectations convince you that the distinguished talents you are graciously pleased to attribute to me, my fair sister, have been hitherto, and are likely always to remain, useless ornaments? and, therefore, that it would be the height of folly in me, to object to the folly of Mr. Barham."

Before Isabel had time to reply the door opened suddenly, and the identical person of whom they were talking bounded into the room.

"Oh, Miss Wilmot, is it true?"

"Is what true?" counter-questioned Maria.

"Is it true that you are going to have a ball?"

"Quite true;" she answered.

"Oh what fun it will be—an Irish ball—how capital;" and he spun about the room like a tetotum. "Pat Murphy told me all about it; but I thought he was only trotting me; and lady Anne has been so kind as to ask me to stay here as long as I like. Mc Alpine Castle, she tells me, is such a stoopid place—no fun at all going on there—I'm so glad I was overturned on my way to it."

"So am I, too;" thought Maria.

"Do you know," continued Mr. Barham, "that I think Mr. Mc Alpine rather stoopid himself? I never should take him for an Irishman; he never makes one laugh, does he, now? I'm so glad I have come here, instead of going to him — I hope you will have

the ball soon—guess how many quadrilles I danced once?"

"Nine;" answered Maria.

"What do you say to twenty-four?" cried he, triumphantly, "and wasn't a bit tired afterwards."

"Bless me! I never heard of such a thing:" said Maria, looking astonished, "I declare I think you must be jesting, Mr. Barham."

"Oh no; quite serious, I assure you, so you see, I shall do capitally in Ireland, shant I? you must know I fancy myself quite an Irishman already. I asked Pat Murphy and Mr. Molly, if they did not think so, and they said they did. Would you believe, that I know all your servants' names already? such funny names! they made me laugh so. When I go back to England, I intend bringing some Irish servants with me, just to make me laugh, and remind me of the pleasant time I am spending here."

"Please God," thought Maria, "you shall take something back that will still better remind you of "the pleasant time you are spending here:" she added aloud, "is this

the only province of Ireland that you have visited?"

"Oh no, I have been all over it. I have been to the Giant's Causeway, such a funny place as it is—such lots of rocks, and things heaped one over the other—and the lakes of Killarney; I saw them too; I caught some trout in one of them, and broiled them on the arbutus myself—I wouldn't let anybody assist me—such fun as I had—I fell into the Lake and was nearly drowned, but the guide jumped after me and caught me just as I was sinking, it was very good-natured of him, wasn't it? so I gave him twenty pounds—he deserved that I am sure, and a great deal more, for saving me—did he not, Miss Wilmot?"

"Indeed, he did, treble the sum;" responded Maria, with alacrity—"you paid him, however, very generously, I am sure he gave you abundance of blessings."

"Oh yes, such a lot of 'em—he told me I was some king or potentate in disguise; and when I told him I was only an English gentleman, travelling about just for a lark—he said he wished all English gentlemen were like me—and that I was the truth of a gentleman—

for I had the purse of an Englishman, and the heart of an Irishman. Wan't that a compliment, Miss Wilmot?"

Before Miss Wilmot had time to answer, he ran on, "You can't imagine how surprised I was when I felt myself in the water. I had not been thinking of anything particular, you know—just sailing about to see the lions of the place; and I got tired looking at them at last; and so leaned back just to take a snooze for a minute or two; when pop, I fell overboard! that was my first adventure on coming to Ireland; and my second was, when I fell into the bog-hole, here—I hope I shall have some more—I wonder what my third will be, what do you think, Miss Wilmot?"

"To be married to me, I hope;" thought Maria.

"Do guess, Miss Wilmot, do;" urged Mr. Barham.

"Perhaps," said Maria, "it may be to fight a duel."

"Oh, do you think so?" he exclaimed, eagerly—I should like that of all things—a duel in Ireland! what capital fun 'twould be! so Irish! I should have such laughing with

my chums at King's when I go back to Cambridge, about my Irish duel! they will call me Paddy Barham; don't you think they will, Miss Wilmot?—I hope they will—I would give any thing to be called Paddy Barham."

"But sometimes," said Maria, "people are killed in Irish duels; men shoot, as well as laugh, unfortunately, in this merry, murderous country of ours."

"I should not like to be killed at all," said Mr. Barham, looking rather put out;—"I should hate to die;—I havn't had much fun yet; such a tiresome stoopid thing as it is to be dead!"

r. Barham paused a few moments, struck with the possibility of so funny a thing as an Irish duel terminating in so stoopid a thing as death.

"But, after all, Miss Wilmot," said he, resuming his usual expression of inexpressiveness, "after all, very few persons *are* killed in duels—they are only wounded, mostly.—Now, you must know, I should not mind being wounded at all. When I was at Eton, my master (the boy I was fag to, you know) used to promise me a guinea for every pin I should

stick into my hand in half-an-hour—guess how many guineas I got once."

"Six, perhaps," said Maria.

"What do you say to two dozen!—so, you see I should not mind a little pain for fun.—But I should have a great objection to being killed — shouldn't you? Oh! Miss Wilmot, will you have the kindness to play me an Irish jig? Mr. Molly says you play so well!"

"Heaven be praised," said Maria to herself, as she moved towards the piano—"he will now hold his tongue for a few minutes, at any rate; how thankful I am he did not take it into his head to ask me for an Irish story!"

"What a funny tune!" exclaimed Mr. Barham, enchanted—"How well you do play!—Oh, Miss Wilmot, will you do me a still greater favour?—Will you dance the jig now you have played it for me?—I want so to learn jigs,—else I shall not be able to dance at your ball, you know?"

"Why, you don't suppose we shall dance jigs, do you?" said Maria, laughing.

"I always thought," replied Mr. Barham, laughing too, as he invariably did when he saw any body else laugh, even though it might

be, as in the present instance, at himself,—"I always thought the jig was the National dance of Ireland.'

"Among the peasantry," observed Maria.

"Well, what then will you dance?" enquired Mr. Barham.

"Quadrilles and waltzes."

"Quadrilles and waltzes!" he repeated in a tone of disappointment—"Psha!—I'm tired of *them;* tiresome, stoopid things!—I'm so sorry! I made sure of such fun! Why, I might as well be in England, if you dance nothing but quadrilles and waltzes!—To be in Ireland, and not dance jigs—how tiresome! I have been three weeks in Ireland, and I have not seen a jig danced yet!"

"Have you not, really?—I'll see what I can do for you at the ball, then; but I can't promise. To tell you the truth, I'm afraid all our rank and fashion will go into fits at the notion of such a thing as jigs any where but in a poor man's cabin, or a gentleman's kitchen. But at any rate, you can both dance and see them danced, to your heart's content, if you don't mind going into the servant's-hall—

I'll send for Paddy the piper, directly, if you like, for this evening."

"Oh thank you! thank you! dear Miss Wilmot!" his eyes already jig-dancing with delight, as he exclaimed,—"A piper! a real Irish piper! oh, what capital fun! an Irish piper!—and Irish servants dancing Irish jigs!—I would not have missed coming to Ireland for a thousand pounds! I wouldn't, I declare!"

"Nor would I have had you miss it for double the sum!" said Maria to herself.

Just at this moment, a little bare-legged, red-headed boy, peeped in, and having surveyed the room, was preparing to withdraw again, exclaiming, "She isn't in it;" when he was stopped by Maria.

"What are you looking for, Michelleen?"

"Lookin' every place for my lady, I am, Miss; an' can't find her."

"Why—what do want of her, Michelleen?"

"The masther, Miss, that sent me for her."

"So, my father is returned, is he?" said Isabel, hastily throwing aside the book she had taken up on Mr. Barham's entrance—"I did not expect him back so soon!"—which observation, had it been the faithful transcript of

her thoughts, would have run thus—"So, Lord Warringdon is returned? I did not expect him back so soon!" "Where is my father, Michelleen?"

"Below, in the kitchen," Miss.

"What is he doing there?"

"Seeing afther the English Lord—mysel' never can't remimber the name he has on him, Miss."

"Seeing after him," repeated Isabel—"how do you mean?"

"Oh, nothing very perticklet, Miss, only a fall he got from his horse."

"Good Heavens!" exclaimed Isabel, hastily—"Is he hurt? Michelleen, can't you answer?"

"Troth! I don't know, Miss; but I dare say he is—Paudeen tould me he heard Misther Kelly telling Tom Landnigan, Misther Mc Alpine's man, that Pat Murphy said 'twas Mrs. Mc Donogh's opinion he'd never ate a bit again."

"Nonsense, Michelleen," interrupted Maria, perceiving Isabel grow deadly pale,—"What rigmarole story have you got at there?—

What does Mrs. Mc Donogh know about the matter?"

"Facks, I don't know, Miss, but every one in the counthry does be sayin' Mrs. Mc Donogh is mighty knowledgeable in regard of physics an' cures—How well she said, whin Barney Sullivan's horse was clifted an' smashed intirely, that *he'd* niver ate a bit agin, Miss?"

"Yes—but Lord Warringdon has not been clifted nor smashed intirely, like Barney Sullivan's house! so Mrs. Mc Donogh may be wrong after all, Michelleen. But, pray, why didn't you say at once that he was hurt?"

"Sure the masther didn't bid me, Miss, tell any body but my Lady."

"The master didn't bid you, Michelleen!" cried Maria—"Could'nt your own sense tell you that much, child? So, I suppose if the master happened to fall from his own horse, and wasn't able to speak, you wouldn't tell any body, because, indeed, he didn't bid you?"

"Hubbaboo! I'd *riz* the counthry, let alone the house, if the masther hurted his little finger; not to talk of breaking his bones.

God betixt us an' harum," cried little Michelleen, making the sign of the cross.

"Why, then, didn't you tell us that Lord Warringdon got the fall?" enquired Maria.

"Sure, Miss, I didn't think it signified, in regard of his bein' a foreigner, an'—"

"Didn't think it signified?" cried Isabel, indignantly — "What an ill-natured little creature you must be!"

Michelleen hung his head, and scraped the floor with the largest digit of his not very clean little foot. Mr. Barham was so busy, watching the little Irish boy shifting from one bare mottled leg to another, scratching his head and scraping the floor, while undergoing this interrogatory, that he never observed how much more important a circumstance Miss Isabella Wilmot seemed to consider Lord Warringdon's having fallen from his horse, and "never likely to ate a bit again," than Michelleen thought it.

"Come, Isabel, love," said Maria, "let us go and see how the case really stands."

Michelleen, in high glee at escaping any further examination from the young ladies, scampered off to ascertain, for his own satis-

faction, whether "the English Lord was only kilt, or actually kilt dead;" and Mr. Barham scampered off after Michelleen.

"Don't be frightened, Isabel," said Maria, as she felt her sister's hand tremble on her arm—"you may be certain it is nothing very serious, or my father would have sent no message by that stupid, blundering Michelleen."

Her supposition proved correct. They found Lord Warringdon standing in the midst of a group of idlers, talking to Mr. Wilmot, who was inspecting the letter-bag, just arrived viâ Andy Mr. Donogh, surnamed Andy the Post. The viscount looked a little paler than usual, and his arm was in a sling; otherwise, he did not appear by any means in a state to justify the ominous prediction of Mrs. Mc Donogh, as detailed by Michelleen on Paudeen's authority, which prediction really ran thus:

"'Tis well he was not hurted so he'd never ate a bit again—for there's many a one lost his life upon a smaller provication."

"I'm glad to find you still in the land of the living, my lord, and likely to continue

there;" said Maria — "Michelleen all but buried you."

"Oh, 'tis a mere trifle—" returned Lord Warringdon, smiling, "a sprained wrist only—fortunately, the accident occurred close to the dispensary, so the injury was promptly remedied."

"I hope you do not suffer much pain?" said Isabel, who had begun to recover her self-possession. The tone and look by which these simple words were accompanied left no doubt on the mind of the person to whom they were addressed of the sincerity with which they were uttered—confirmed too as they were by the agitation he had remarked on her first entering the kitchen. What man ever fails to notice the interest he inspires?

"Here are letters for you, my lord!" said Mr. Wilmot.

The party were leaving the kitchen when Barham called after Maria:

"Oh—Miss Wilmot, you are forgetting the Piper."

"Perhaps, as Lord Warringdon has met this accident," replied Maria, "it might be as

well to defer it till another evening—the noise might be disagreeable to him."

"Oh no—I beg you don't alter your arrangements on my account—the pain is very trifling, and the Piper will serve rather to amuse than annoy me."

"You are quite right, Lord Warringdon:" exclaimed Barham, delighted, "I assure you a little fun is the best cure in the world for pain of any kind:" and, so saying, off he gallopped in search of a messenger, to carry Maria's mandate to Paddy *Bacha*, commanding his attendance that evening.

CHAPTER II.

"HA!" exclaimed Lord Warringdon, as he cast his eye over the letter just handed him by Mr. Wilmot, "My father tells me that parliament is to be dissolved immediately. What shall I do? this unlucky sprain will prevent my holding a pen, and yet I ought not to lose a moment in addressing the county. Is there any one here who would have the charity to lend me a hand, while I dictate?" said he, looking round on the group.

"You shall have Isabel," said Lady Anne good-humouredly. "She is always her fa-

ther's secretary; and, as he happens to be very lazy, he does not allow her pen much rest, I assure you; and, thanks to such good practice, she has become quite *au fait*,—a capital electioneering address-writing young lady, I can tell you; so here she is, at your service. You have no objection, have you, my love?" she added, in a stage-whisper, to her daughter, while she settled one of her pretty, soft curls. "I'll explain to Mc Alpine, you know, and, I dare say, he will forgive my disposing of you for this morning; so politics and business to-day,—love and Byron to-morrow," she continued, smiling archly. "Well, good people, I will no longer disturb you. Come, my dear Wilmot, you and I are *de trop*, here;—*au revoir*." She nodded good-homouredly, and left the room.

"I have many apologies to make to you," said Lord Warringdon, for having so unceremoniously accepted Lady Anne's offer of your assistance; particularly," added he, smiling sarcastically, "as I understand you have made other arrangements for the day."

"I am not aware of any engagement that I would not willingly have given up, to be of

service to you," replied Isabel, in a faultering tone; but, fearing she had said too much, she added, blushing, " Or, indeed, to any person, under the same circumstances."

"Thank you for that flattering qualification," rejoined the viscount, laughing, and contemplating his fair secretary with all the self-complacency of a gratified, vain man.

"Is your arm comfortable now?" she asked, anxious to escape from his scrutinizing look. "I fancy the sling is rather high;—shall I lower it?"

Her companion felt more than half inclined to have answered the question by touching with his lips the pretty little trembling hand of the fair querist; had she been married, in all probability he would have done so; but, in these days, to kiss a single woman's hand, is tantamount to a declaration. And so the admiring, but prudent, viscount, contented himself with thanking her, in words, for her kindness. "She is a nice creature," thought he; "what a pity she has not money!"

For an hour, or two, the young politicians continued immersed in business. But, as

every thing must have an end, the address was, at length, composed and copied out. The viscount found himself assisted by Isabel, not only in the manual execution, but also in the composition of the document; yet, her assistance had been given with so much tact, that she appeared rather to have quickly seized, and skilfully embodied, his ideas, than to have suggested any of her own; so that he himself seemed even to deserve the whole credit of the performance. Never before, indeed, had he been able to clothe his thoughts in such neat and close expressions; his self-love was, therefore, gratified; and, being in good humour with himself, he was naturally so with the person who had proved instrumental in producing this self-complacency.

For some time previous to this morning, Lord Warringdon had been tiring of being nothing but an *Epouvantail des Maris*, and had desired to play a rôle in public life. But, unfortunately, he was blessed with more pretension than application; and he had often wished to possess and to have constantly near him some person capable of supplying his want of energy, but who would, meantime,

be satisfied to allow him all the credit due to success and its results, not only from society, but from his very self. He was aware, however, that such devotedness could be expected from a woman only, from a wife, in fact: and where could he find a woman uniting the ability and the affection necessary for such an office? In fact, for more than a year he had been asking himself this question, and in the course of this morning it at length occurred to him that Isabel Wilmot was an answer to it. As for Isabel, her care of the *amour propre* of her companion had been prompted simply by affection;—by the unwilled, but unerring, skill of the heart; yet, had she acted from prudence and calculation, she could not have devised a better plan for advancing her interests. For, in these days of Utilitarianism, when every generous impulse is arrested by a "*cui bono*," the woman who succeeds in impressing a man with the notion that she can be useful to him has presented to his mind an *argumentum at hominem*, that, sooner or later, will work to her advantage, nay, help to get her a husband.

A characteristic of genius is, not that it

can exactly create circumstances, but that it knows how to employ them. Lady Anne could not have made her husband's Arab take fright at an old woman, and throw its rider, upon that day, more than upon any other; still less could she have ensured to the said young rider a sprained wrist, instead of a broken neck, or leg. Neither could Lady Anne have influenced his Britannic Majesty to dissolve his faithful Lords and Commons, just at this time, for the purpose of *synchronizing* with the viscount's tumble off his exotic horse. Still, however, was Lady Anne able to turn these events to good account. Her ladyship's previous manœuvring had so completely mystified her young guest that he never suspected her of any motive, but that of good nature, in her selection of Isabel for his amanuensis.

When Lady Anne returned, she found the young pair seated, side by side, chatting over the fire, Lord Warringdon's arm on the back of Isabel's chair, quite lover-like.

"Fie! fie! there you are talking, you idle creatures, instead of writing; it should have been business first, and play afterwards, as

we say to the children! Oh, you naughty two!" said she, playfully tapping her daughter's cheek, and Lord Warringdon's shoulder.

"Thus do I disprove your foul calumny," replied he, in the same tone, holding up his address.

"No! have you really finished it? how quick you have been,—admirable!" cried she; "nothing can be better;—so dexterously composed;—no one interest sacrificed to that of another; those who wish that sinecures should be kept, because they have a chance of getting them; and those who wish to have them abolished, because they never expect to profit by them;—those who want the National debt taken off, and those who would like to increase the pension list: those who cry out for Catholic emancipation, and those who insist on keeping up the Protestant ascendancy; each and all may claim Warringdon as their champion. Yes; the gradations of form and colour are skilfully managed, indeed, in this piece of political Mosaic! Bravo, my lord! How clever that girl is!" said she to herself; then, turning to her daughter, "What a capital diplomatist this member of ours will

make; here is finesse enough for an European empire wasted on an Irish county!"

Lady Anne was aware that the great object of Lord Warringdon's ambition, for some time, had been to figure as a cabinet minister. Now she saw him smile, highly gratified.

"I am very much flattered that you approve it; but recollect that I had an invaluable assistant in your fair daughter," he politely added.

"Oh, as for my poor Isabel," replied the mother, kissing her daughter's snowy forehead, "I don't imagine that she could have been of any service to you.—No, you are not quite *diplomate* enough to persuade me you think that." Then, lowering her voice as she addressed her daughter, "Mc Alpine is in the next room; you may now go and chat with him, love, for he is quite moping and miserable without you."

Lady Anne peceived, with much satisfaction, that Lord Warringdon's eyes followed Isabel, as she moved reluctantly out of the room; and when the door closed on her graceful figure, and when he turned round to look at the fire, that he appeared in a very bad humour.

"Poor Mc Alpine," said she, laughing, has been quite like a fish out of water, all day. My heart smites me for having taken Isabel away from him: but he's so good humoured about it, poor fellow;—the most amiable being in the world."

Lord Warringdon brushed up his dark curls, and leaned back in his chair, with all the nonchalance of an exclusive, listening to an irksome subject.

"What do you think of my son-in-law elect!" said she, after a pause.

"Candidly?" enquired he, with affected indifference.

"Oh, by all means," replied she.

"Candidly, then," I think him a devilish ill-looking, stupid fellow."

"I don't at all agree with you, my lord," said she, with well-acted warmth; "he is the reverse of stupid, he possesses considerable talent; and, as for looks, men never judge fairly of one another, there;—he is quite as well to be liked as the generality of people," glancing somewhat offensively at her companion.

The corners of his lordship's handsome

mouth curled into an expression of quiet disdain. "My dear Lady Anne, recollect I did not obtrude my opinion of Mr. Mc Alpine,—you rather pressed me for it."

Lady Anne shock her foot a few seconds, a gesture Lord Warringdon had remarked in her as indicative of displeasure;—he hummed an opera air. "I should be very much obliged to you, my Lord," she continued, "not to be as candid with my daughter as you have been with myself, in your criticisms upon a person about to become a member of my family. Girls are foolish and romantic, and imagine they must be passionately attached to a man in order to marry him; and I, therefore, make it a personal request that you, in future, keep your opinion of Mr. Mc Alpine to yourself. It might do Isabel irreparable injury, by setting her against him."

"Setting her against Mr. Mc Alpine!" repeated he, sarcastically; "how could that be possible? I understood you to say he was quite the *beau ideal* of your imagination, the quintessence of all perfection, moral and physical."

"Allow me to set you right, my lord,"

replied she, with much offended dignity; "I am perfectly aware that Mr. Mc Alpine is not a Colonel C. in beauty, nor a Lord L. G. in talent; all I said was, that he had as much of both as people in general," laying emphasis on the last words. "And I add this, that he is a most excellent, kind-hearted, high-principled, honourable young man, passionately attached to my daughter, who begins, at length, to appreciate his merit, and to see that she has a much better chance of happiness with him than with a beauty, a genius, or a man of fashion."

"*C'est possible*," replied his lordship, with an indifference intended to be provoking; "*Moi jé ne dispute jamais, surtout avec les dames*,—will you permit me to touch the bell for my servant? 'tis time to dress for dinner."

Lady Anne bowed stiffly, and Lord Warringdon determined to inform Isabel, the very first opportunity, of his opinion concerning Mr. Mc Alpine, should she, indeed, happen to be ignorant of it.

The conversation was interrupted by the entrance of Mr. Wilmot and Maria, followed

by Mr. Barham, laughing as usual, "ready to die."

As soon as she thought that she might resume her usual blandness towards the Viscount, she turned to her husband;—"You have not seen Lord Warringdon's address yet, I believe;—'tis really admirable."

"Oh, I recognize Isabel's touches here," said the careless, undesigning father, pleased at this additional evidence of his daughter's talents.

"Yes," said Lady Anne, rising and touching her husband's shoulder, as she leaned over him;—"You know Lord Warringdon sprained his wrist, and could not write; so it is in Isabel's hand-writing; but that does not signify."

"Oh, no, to be sure," rejoined Wilmot, understanding his wife's hint;—"'Tis excellent, my dear Lord,—cannot possibly be better:—here, Maria, have you seen it?"

"What is it all about?" enquired Mr. Barham, struck by the admiration which this sheet of paper excited, as it passed from hand to hand;—"Is it a hoax Lord Warringdon has been writing, Miss Wilmot?"

"Why, really, 'tis very much the same thing," replied she, laughing; "'tis an address to the county."

"Oh, is that all? — something political only," said he, in a tone of disappointment. "I wonder that people ever trouble themselves about politics, stoopid things!"

About two hours after dinner, the door opened, and Pat Murphy entered, smiling.

"Is he come?" cried Barham.

"He is, sir."

"Oh, Miss Wilmot, he's come; good news, Lord Warringdon, he's come!" And away he flew, clapping his hands, followed by Maria.

"What in the world 's the matter with him?" cried Mr. Mc Alpine; "who is it that's come?"

"No less a personage than Paddy *Boucha*," said Mr. Wilmot, laughing.

"Ra'ally, I'm astonished at your patience, Lady Anne, with such a silly, uninteresting crature as he is: I am ra'ally exthramely annoyed that I have been the manes of inflicting him on you."

"Pray don't say a word about it, my dear friend," replied Lady Anne, with one of her

most gracious smiles. "Any guest of yours would be welcome here."

"Unfortunately," resumed Mr. Mc Alpine, "I could not take him away without going myself; and how could I do that? how could I," he added, whispering tenderly to Isabel, who was seated between him and the Viscount, "how could I have the courage to tear myself from her I adore,—from the idol of my soul,—the soft star of my destiny? What would my fair charmer have said, in that case, of her truant knight?"

"I was just going to ask you to acccompany me to the revels, below," said Lord Warringdon."

"And why not?" replied Isabel, eagerly; "I am quite ready."

"Oh, no, I must not take you away a second time, from 'love and Byron,' said he, glancing alternately at Mr. Mc Alpine and Lady Anne. "Your mamma and I have had a battle royal, to-day, about the '*beau futur*,' and she has commanded me, on pain of her imperial displeasure, never to say, or even to think, that Byron could have a fitter interpreter, or Love a more eloquent or persuasive

votary; and, moreover, that it must be felony, without benefit of clergy, to let you suppose that I, or any body else, could ever imagine greater perfection. I never saw a woman so much in love with her daughter's lover in all my life; more than you yourself, I think, *la belle Fiancée.*"

"You have chosen a disagreeable subject, my Lord," said she, colouring; "I should be obliged by your changing it."

"Your wishes are laws to me, my fair secretary," said he, bowing with mock deference; "never again will I say aught to disturb your equanimity;—am I forgiven? and will you take my arm, and accompany me to where they are 'tripping on the light fantastic toe,' as the Morning Post has it?"

Isabel smiled forgiveness, and they quitted the room together.

CHAPTER III.

When Lord Warringdon and Isabel entered the servants' hall, they were received with the same manifestations of joy which had greeted Maria and Mr. Barham. The huzzaing and clapping of hands was, indeed, excessively gratifying; but it was also excessively deafening; inasmuch as every member of the Castle Wilmot household, reinforced by travellers "going the road," who had lounged in for their dinner, and the idlers of the neighbourhood, who had been attracted by the piper, contributed, each and all, their utmost

strength of palms and lungs, to do honour to "the quallity." The acclamations for the lastcome couple even surpassed, perhaps, those which had welcomed the first—for in addition to the company already alluded to, great numbers of the Mc Alpine tenants (who had strayed over to Castle Wilmot to see their master, in consequence of some one of the multitudinous occurrences which an Irish tenant is perpetually in the habit of referring to his landlord,) were present; and they, looking upon Miss Isabel Wilmot, as their master's property, received her with all the respect and warmth due to their future mistress; crying out, "High for Miss Isabel Wilmot! high for Masther Mc Alpine!" A couple already occupied "the flure,"—viz., Peggy the pretty laundry-maid, and Jim Naughton, of *sans*-pole-driving memory, who had "stepped in with his horses," on his way homewards to Masther Costelloe, from some break-neck excursion. Peggy acknowledged the entrance of "the quallity," by a curtsey, as she sidled along in her dance, and kept her eyes modestly bent on the ground, never by any chance raising them to the face of her partne. Jim,

on his part, evinced his sense of their presence, by whirling his hand round his head, and jumping more vigorously than he had done before, and cutting five or six times in the air.

"The lower orders of England," observed Isabel to Lord Warringdon, "suspend their merriment either from respect, or shyness, upon the appearance of their superiors; but our people, who have a truer sense of what real politeness consists in, laugh and dance as before, rightly inferring that their masters and mistresses have come purposely to witness their pleasantry, and, therefore, that respect and attention are best evinced by making an effort to amuse.

Mr. Barham was almost in convulsions of laughter at the "funny piper, and the funny dancing."

"God save all here;" cried a voice behind him.

"Oh, Mr. Molly, is that you? I am so glad to see you—" said he, seizing the priest's hands and nearly wringing them off—"I have missed you so much, you can't think! I was

just wondering what had become of you!—What capital fun this is, Mr. Molly?"

"What fun, Mr. Barham? myself don't see any fun, where is it?"

"Why there;" rejoined Mr. Barham, pointing to the dancers—"don't you see the droll postilion dancing?"

"A what, droll postilion? let's thry and see:" cried father John, looking over Barham's shoulder. "Pooh—'tis nobody but Jim Naughton dancing the way he always does. I never seen one like him," said he, turning to Maria, "for seeing fun, where nobody else but himself can see it. *I* don't see any thing so mighty comical in a little girl and boy dancing; one would think 'twas dancing on their heads they were, or doing some quare trick or other: he does be laughing so; them English has no sinse at all, Miss Maria, honey."

"Perhaps, we should laugh as heartily as he does, if we saw all this for the first time, father John:" observed Maria.

"May be so, *agra*, you know better than me."

The first dance ended, and punch and even good raw whiskey, were handed about.

The priest took a glass, and, holding it over his head—"Here's to the health of the young ladies, and good husbands to them, and soon —hip, hip, hurrah!"

This toast was received with huzzas and laughter, interpersed with cries of "Amin—amin—long life to 'em, the darlins—aye, troth, good husbands to them, and soon—and the sooner the betther!"

"An' now the gintleman's healths:" cried a voice in the crowd.

"Let each of the young ladies dhrink the health of the gintleman that's wid her:" this amendment was welcomed with cries of, "success to ye Jim—my blessing to ye!"

"Very well—" said Maria, laughing good humouredly, "here's to the health of William Barham, Esq., of Cralcourt, Leicestershire, and may he always continue as fond of fun and of Ireland as he is at this present moment—hip, hip, hurrah!"

"Glory to ye! comical crature ye are, sure enough!" exclaimed the laughing and applauding crowd.

"Now, Miss Isabel!" but Miss Isabel hesitated—"'tis your turn now, *agra*;" said Mrs. Mc Donogh—"why don't you take your patthern afther your sisther, my honey—do, *asthore ma cree*, or else," continued she, lowering her voice, "the tinants will be thinking 'tis proud ye are—there's my darling:" cried she triumphantly, as Isabel prepared to oblige her—"I knew well the delight of my heart, wouldn't refuse her father's ould nurse."

"Whisht! whisht! hould your bother—don't you see she is going to spake—don't be making sich a noise:" roared one to the other, as they began to applaud before she had begun to speak.

Silence was at length obtained, and all eyes were fixed on Isabel as she gave her toast—

"Here's to the health of Lord Warringdon, and may he, as our representative, ever prove the friend of the county, and of Ireland in general, and," she added, falteringly, "live long and happily!"

"And a pretty Irish wife to him:" added Jim Naughton—"Troth, he might go farther and fare worse;" glancing at Isabel; and the cries of "Success to ye, Jim!—high for Miss

Isabel! high for her, the darling purty, quiet little cratur! and a good husband to her, and soon!" quite confounded the poor girl.

Lord Warringdon perceived her embarrassment, and bowing, and smiling his thanks for the honour she had done him, took the glass from her trembling hand.

"To the health of Mr. Wilmot and his family!" said he—"my best wish for Ireland is, that all her landlords may be like him, and all her women like his daughters."

"Glory to ye—glory to ye, my lord—long life to ye!" shouted the people, as they thundered forth their sympathy in his wishes for Ireland, and for what they deemed the first family in Ireland.

"What a darlin' purty couple, himsel' and Miss Isabel would make;" observed Peggy the laundry-maid, to her admirer, Pat Murphy.

"They would so:" agreed Pat, who happened to be in a particularly complaisant humour that evening — "they would so, a'most as purty a couple as yoursel' and mysel', Peggy."

"The divil's impidence you have, sure

enough," cried Peggy, "to be comparing the likes of uz to the likes of them! But, now Pat," she added, in a coaxing tone, "don't you see yoursel', I was right?"

"When, asthore? when you tould me I was the darlin' of your heart, is it? you war indeed, Peggy."

"Faith, I never tould you that," replied the bashful Peggy, "I'd be very sorry to be telling an unthruth:" spite of herself, however, smiling slily.

"Well, may be," rejoined Pat, "you mightn't spake intirely so plain as that; any how, you tould it me, the way I'd understand, 'tis that was your maning."

"Don't bother us," interrupted his gentle mistress, "tisn't that I mane at all, you know very well. No—but wasn't I right when I said, who know'd but may be, the English lord and one of the young ladies would be a match—wasn't I right, Pat?"

"To be sure you war—arnt you always right, *ma colleen dhas?*" replied he, gallantly, at the same time causing her to exclaim—

"Behave now, Pat Murphy! bad cess to your impidence! your aqual for impidence

Pat Murphy, I never seen, and the quallity by, and all—bad manners to ye."

"The Lord save us! forgive us this onst, and God bless ye, Peggy—I forgot the quallity was in it—I'll wait agin till they're gone, *ma vourneen*."

"Faith, my advice to ye is to keep your hands to yoursel' for good an' all, Pat Murphy, an' behave yoursel', whether the quallity is in it, or no—or let who will be in it."

"'Tis you would be mad, sure enough, if I tuck ye at your word;" rejoined Pat, laughing provokingly.

"*Scnadth wanordth!* * Pat Murphy! how dare ye say that? I've the greatest mind in the world to give ye"—Pat advanced his face with a coxcombical expression that enraged his prudish mistress—and she raised a somewhat large hand, and let it fall heavily on his cheek—"Take *that*, ye concated omadhoun ye!"—

Pat laughed and rubbed his cheek—"ye *laned* rather heavy, Peggy, my pet—you've a'most smashed my jaw, my honey."

Mr. Barham, who had been listening to

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* A hungry cry in the morning to ye!

the colloquy, and who had succeeded in stifling his laughter, by nearly stifling himself in his pocket-handkerchief, could no longer restrain his delight, but clapping his hands in ecstacy at such a specimen of Irish flirtation, crying out, " You served him right—how good! oh what capital fun!"

The piper struck up a merry tune, and Winny the housemaid came up and dropped a curtsey—" Mr. Barham, if you plaze, sir," said she smiling and blushing.

"What is it? do you wish to sit down?" asked he civilly making room for her.

" It's axing you to dance, she is, sir;" said Peggy.

" Is she really? I am very much obliged to you, Winny, but I'm sadly afraid I don't know how to dance a jig yet; I should put you out I'm sure."

" Oh, not at all, sir;" replied the girls, chiming in together—" 'tis mighty asy, you have nothing in the world to do sir, only just to humour the tune, and whatever side of the room your partner does be, to keep opposite to her."

" And whin its over, sir," interrupted Pat,

"just to put your arm round her purty little waist, and say thank ye my Pet, and shoot the action to the word, sir."

"What a funny fellow you are!" cried Mr. Barham."

"Hould your bother, Pat Murphy!" said Winny, reddening with offended modesty.

The crowd cheered the young Englishman as he stood up to dance.

"Ax your partner what tune she'll have, sir:" whispered Jim Naughton.

Barham adopted the suggestion.

"Oh, 'tis all the same to me, sir, whatever yoursel' would like, would be pleasing to me."

"No, let you choose, Winny, you know best what tune will suit us."

"Ax her, sir, would she have 'tattered Jack Walsh.'"

"Oh, what a funny name:" cried Barham.

"Choke ye! Jim Naughton!" cried Winny frowning.

"Perhaps you do not like to dance that tune?" observed Barham, good naturedly—"you can choose any other you like better."

"Oh, there's nothing she li es so well as that, sir:" interrupted Jim, laughing—"she doats down upon it."

"You have some joke about it, I am sure Jim, do tell me what it is, there's a good fellow!" cried Barham, eagerly.

"Oh, nothing at all, sir, only a boy, a friend of mine, one Jack Walsh, that does be dhriving along with mysel', for misther Costelloe; and himsel' and Winny does be mighty great together, he's her bachelor, you know, sir."

"Faith, an' he isn't:" interrupted Winny, scowling at her lover's *fides achates,* Jim Naughton.

"An' he's a great fighter and roisterer at fairs, an' pattherns, sir," continued Jim, "an' one turn, he got the worst of it, at the fair of Derrymanagoslogh, hard by the castle here; an' he come in here the same night to Winny with his clothes tore to tatthers, the most miserable looking craturever you seen, sir, an' ever sence we called him tatthered Jack Walsh, after the jig—an' Winny does be mad, on account of the joke about her bachelor. Whenever you want to make Winny come up stairs

smart to you sir, you've nothing to do but to call out over the bannister, 'Tatthered Jack Walsh,' an' 'tis, she will skelp aft to ye, in a jiffy, sir."

Barham enjoyed amazingly this piece of Irish wit—while waiting for some tune which should suit Winny's taste, and yet not furnish Jim with materials for mischievous applications. Barham talked to his partner.

"So, in Ireland, the women ask the men to dance—what funny girls you must be! but when you want to be married, do ye ask the men to marry ye?"

"Ax the min to marry us, is it? Musha, faith an' we don't,—why would we? Thank God there's no occasion, indeed, we'd be giving oursel's that throuble any how, they've good warrants to say that much for themsel's. Faith, they'd have to wait long enough if they waited till we'd ax 'em—pity indeed!" Here the jig struck up: "now if you plase, Mr. Barham."

Barham, who had rather a good ear, contrived "to humour' the tune," very tolerably for a first attempt; and his love of fun inspired him with all the agility necessary—

he jumped and shouldered very much in the style of Jim Naughton, to the imexpressible delight and admiration of the bye-standers.

"What an iligant match himsel' an' Miss Maria would be!" observed Peggy, "they have such gaining ways with them, jist cut off the same patthern the pair of 'em are—an' so found as he is of her—evermore running afther her, you'd think he'd lose his life when she's out of his sight a minute—axing about her, and looking every place for her—an' thin such screeching-laughing as they do be having together, whin he finds her onst more."

"Pooh! he is no match for her, he has no sense:" remarked Bartly the groom.

"'Tis you that's the judge sure enough, whether he has or no;" retorted Peggy.

"What matthers about his sinse?" observed the cook, "she has enough, I'll be bound, for hersel' an' himsel'."

"T'will be a match, you'll see:" insisted Peggy.

"It won't;" cried the groom.

"It will;" reiterated Peggy—"an', moreover, Miss Isabel an' the English lord will

be another match, as sure as my name is Peggy Flanagan."

"Oh thin your name isn't Peggy Flanagan, so," interrupted Mr. Mc Alpine's groom, "that will never be a match, I can tell you—"

"Why won't it?" demanded Peggy—

"Becase," answered he, "my Masther Mr. Mc Alpine will niver let her lave this country—he intends keeping her for himsel'—he doats down upon her, an' well he may, for she's a most beautiful, eligant, finely edicated young lady, as ever you'd wish to see—jist the moral of himsel', for all the world—they're as like one another as two pays—every one in the counthry does be saying they're made a purpose for one another—you niver seen sich a way as he does be going on about her, up at the castle—there a most iligant mare he has, he has called afther her—an' a boat he has on the lake that gais by her name, too—un' he does be making poethry on her, out of a poethry book he has up at the castle, at home—an' he does be repating the poethry when he does be out riding—an' I'm credibly informed," continued he, lowering his voice, "that he's come here this turn a purpose to make his

purposals for her, out o' hand—see there! how he's jist come in, along with her ladyship —look at himsel' an' Miss Isabel, now—Isn't he coorting her, like mad, this minute—see how well he can't take his eyes off her, but does be whispering to her, something I'll be bound she's mighty plased to hear, see how purty an' modest she keeps lookin' on the ground."

"My blessing to her—she's in the right of it!" muttered Peggy unheard by the last speaker—"not to be looking on an ugly yallow cratur of his kind—poor girl, as I am, Mrs. Mc Donogh, I'd rather beg the world over with one I'd like, than I'd be sitting on a throne of goold with the likes of him, beside the—"

"Mysel' don't so much mis-like him, truth," observed Winny, who had just joined the group of Castle Wilmot followers, then occupied descanting out of hearing of the Mc Alpines on the ill favoured visage of their Lord— "he's always a good warrant to give me five or six tinpinny bits, if he stops but the night—an' I niver seen a gintleman less trouble in his room, than himsel'—he's a mighty clane gintleman, Peggy—mighty clane,

itsel'—the one jug o' wather, an' the one towel lasts him a for'night—an' thin such other splashing and washing, an' slopping an' lathering as other gintlemen keeps, one must be always running every minute to give a touch to the flure, Peggy—"

"I'm not saying whether he's a clane gintleman or no," rejoined Peggy—"I have nothing to say to him good or bad thank God! all I'm saying is, that the English Lord, would be far beyant him, in regard of a husband for Miss Isabel—"

"Avoch—to be sure, he would, Peggy—it will be a match you 'll see, Peggy."

"A' to be sure it will—isn't that what I'm saying all night?"

"When my masther Mr. Mc Alpine marries Miss Isabel Wilmot," observed Tom Landrigan, Mr. Mc Alpine's man, to Mr. Kelly and Pat Murphy, "what rejoicing there will be all over the counthry! what an eligant wedding we'll have; Castle Wilmot, and Mc. Alpine castle will carry every thing before 'em—the two finest intherests in the county, Mr. Kelly —they 'll return the two mimbers, asy—" Faith they would so—observed Mr. Kelly—

"as asy as they'd swallow a tumbler o' punch—"

"Aye troth—" said Pat.

Mr. Kelly and Pat Murphy, as men and politicians, were less annoyed by Mr. Mc Alpine's "yallowness," than the females of the household. To return "two mimbers for the county" was in their opinion the culminating point of human grandeur—and Mr. Mc Alpine, having the greatest number of freeholders after their master, was of course the next greatest man in their eyes, and a far more important personage than Viscount Warringdon, consequently a much more desirable alliance for the family. In the glorious days of the "*forty shillingers*," a gentleman's importance was estimated not so much by the productiveness of his acres, as by their quantity, and the number of ragged human beings he could contrive to *pen* upon them. Lord Warringdon might be the first man in England, for any thing Mr. Kelly or Pat Murphy knew or cared to the contrary—but he was not "the first man in the county," any how, nor the second neither. The Castle Wilmot household divided, however, on this

question. The men being all for Mr. Mc Alpine; the women for Lord Warringdon, "because he was a beautiful gintleman, and so grand looking:" because Mrs. Donogh had said that Mr. Symmons had tould her that the finest ladies in the land were fighting who should have him, an' that he could have his pick and choose whenever he liked of 'em, married or no—an' that 'he lived in the greatest state and grandeur with the greatest retinue of servants that ever was seen.

"Pat, you'll see 'twill be the English lord she marries," said Peggy.

"It won't," rejoined Pat.

"*Naboclish*,—you'll see if it won't:—Mrs. Mc Donogh, ma'am, won't it?"

"Of coorse it will," answered Mrs. Mc. Donogh.

"Why of coorse?" asked Pat.

"I am not going to inform you, Pat Murphy, what private reasons I have for thinking so," returned Mrs. Mc Donogh, consequentially.

"One thing I'm sure of, at any rate," said Peggy, "hersel' and Miss Maria will be mar-

ried soon, whomsoever it may be to, on account of the dhrame I had."

"What dhrame, Peggy?" enquired Mrs. Mc Donogh.

"A great dhrame I had, ma'am, about cats and dogs fighting."

"Ay, that's a fine dhrame,—you couldn't have a betther one for marriage, Peggy."

"So I always heerd tell, Ma'am, that to dhrame of cats an' dogs fighting was the finest sign in the world of a marriage."

"Tell us your dhrame, an' God bless you, Peggy," said Mrs. Mc. Donogh.

"Dhraming I was, ma'am, that I was sitting below, in the scullery, dhrying my clothes, becase the chimbly smoked so in the laundhry, I was afeard they'd be all black; an' while I was sitting there, wondhering how long they took to dhry, there come in a big black dog, with red eyes."

"Are ye sure his eyes was red, Peggy?' demanded Mrs. Mc Donogh.

"I am, ma'am,—and he kept running about every place, as though he was looking for something. Mysel' got frickened, he looked so big an' terrible; an' I was staling

out unknownst, when I heard a cat mewing outside the scullery window, sich other mewing, Mrs. Mc Donogh, you niver heard. In my dhrame, I thought 'twas Kutty Murphy's cat, that run wild, an' used to be keeping in the shrubbery, beyant, an' the little boys that used to be throwin' stones at her, you know; the masther bid 'em take care for their lives, would they do the like agin. Well, I thought 'twas Kutty Murphy's cat, so I opened the window, an' let her in, for fear the masther would be mad if I did'nt; and if I did, hersel' and himsel' began fighting. Och! Mrs. Mc Donogh, they bate all ever you seen! tearing an' scratching, an' snarling an' spitting, like mad. My heart was bateing like any thing when I woke, Mrs. Mc Donogh."

"That's a fine dhrame, Peggy, I'll explain it to you."

"Thank'ee, ma'am."

"The big black dog," resumed Mrs. Mc Donogh, "is a gintleman of great fortune an' clever appearance; you remimber my axing ye, Peggy, were ye sure of the colour of his eyes?"

"I do, ma'am," rejoined the dreamer.

"Red eyes," continued the expounder, "is a sign he comes from England; an' lookin' about every place is a sign he comes over here for something particklar,—ye know the English lord come lookin' for the county; the cat mewing is Miss Isabel,—ye know she's not so hearty as what Miss Maria does be; then, you know, hersel' an' himsel' fighting is a sign it's married they will be."

"That's jist what I was thinking mysell', ma'am. "Well, afther that, Mrs. Mc Donogh, I fell asleep the second time, and I thought mysel' and my little sisther was below at the river, wringing out the clothes, an' I felt something scrape my arm, an' I looked back, an' what should I see, but a little, small white dog, with a collar about his neck; an' he kept scrapin', scrapin', even till I looked up, an', faith, there was a cat, a mighty ugly one, itsel', above in the three; a small, miserable-looking cratur, as ever you seen! an' while I was lookin' at her, she turned into a cat as big as a horse; and she jumped off the three, all of a suddent, and tuk the little dog, and began randlin' him. Well, ma'am, they fought, and tore each other to bits, an' she finished

by atin' him, intirely, all to his collar, an' she tuk that in her mouth, an' wint an' scraped, scraped, even till she made a hole in the ground, an' put the collar in it,—and then I woke, for Winny gave a kick in the bed."

"That's a fine dhrame, too, Peggy: the small, little white dog is Mr. Barham; an' the collar is a sign he has a fine fortune; an' the scrapin' is a sign he's always talkin'; the cat in the three is Miss Maria; an' lookin' miserable is a sign that she isn't so at all, Peggy; —drhames, you know, always goes by conthraries:—well, then, her changing to be as big as a horse, is a sign she's to have a fine, large house, and a great dale of children."

"The Lord be praised!" cried Peggy.

"Well, Peggy, her throttling the little dog is a sign she'll have more sinse than him; an' ating him up alive, of coorse, is a sign its man an wife they'll be."

"An' the collar, Mrs. Mc Donogh, what does that mane, ma'am?"

"Oh, the collar, Peggy, is a sign there will be no ind to the grandeur an' prosperity she's to live in;—an', moreover, that she's to

have the upper hand of him;—for she tuk the collar of him, you remimber, Peggy?"

"Musha, that it may be so!" ejaculated Peggy. "God sees and knows, Mrs. Mc. Donogh, there isn't a night nor morning I don't pray for husbands for 'em both. Miss Isabel is'nt so intirely *lauchy* * a cratur as Miss Maria, but she's a mild, quiet little cratur, never gives a sour look, nor cross word;—the Lord purtect 'em both! Miss Maria more especially. What in the world's that they're screeching about there, beyant, Barry Sullivan?"

"Pat Sullivan, Mr. Mc Alpine's foster-brother, that's axing Miss Isabel to dance; and Misther Mc Alpine's tinants are clapping her," replied Barney.

"Mc Alpine and Wilmot for ever!" cried the Mc Alpine followers; "high for Misther Mc Alpine! high for Miss Wilmot!"

"Them tinants of Mr. Mc Alpine are mighty impident, arn't they, ma'am?" questioned Peggy of her oracle, Mrs. Mc Donogh; "You'd think, to hear 'em goin' on, their

* In this sense, *gracieuse*.

masther had nothing in the world to do, but jist to come coortin', and get for axin!"

"What matthers what ignorant people of their description think at all?" replied Mrs. Mc Donogh, shrugging her shoulders, as she cast a look at the yelling, hand-clapping Mc Alpine's followers.

"What manner of breeding can the likes of them have, who has no experience of life? hould your chat," said she, angrily, to one at her side, who was roaring out for 'Miss Isabel and Misther Mc Alpine;' "hould your tongue, —don't you see she don't like it?"

"She does like it," interrupted Pat, afraid of offending the Mc Alpine consequence; "she likes it well, I promise you; only she's ashamed, because Mr. Mc Alpine is by."

Mr. Mc Alpine, though he seldom condescended to dance, thought that this occasion might prove one of the few exceptions to his general rule; and, to reward the fair Isabel for her graciousness, in dancing with his foster-brother, and to shew his sense of the compliment, thereby paid himself, he stood up and relieved his follower, an expression which means that he took the man's place in the

dance, who, according to the usual etiquette, immediately sat down. The shouting and cries of "High for Miss Isabel! high for Misther Mc Alpine!" redoubled, to his delight, and her annoyance, and to the gratification of the men, and infinite displeasure of the women of the Castle-Wilmot establishment. Winny, from her occasional attendance on Lord Warringdon's room, as well as on account of getting a compliment from him, now and then, on her rosy cheeks and blue eyes, when they accidentally met on the stairs, was on talking terms with the Viscount; hence she now addressed him thus:—If I was a fine, cliver gintleman, I wouldn't let a nice young lady have such a yallow face as *that*, for a partner; glancing at Mr. Mc Alpine, "when I'd have a good one of my own to put in its place," laughing, slyly, as she looked up at Lord Warringdon.

"Perhaps, she might be displeased, Winny," replied he, smiling at the compliment and insinuation it conveyed.

"Displeased, is it?" cried Winny; "Musha faith, an' she wouldn't; an' why would she? she has eyes in her head."

Lord Warringdon took the hint, and, imitating what he had seen others do, relieved Mr Mc Alpine, who looked waxing very indignant, thereupon; Isabel, however, did not;—her previous flush of vexation was immediately replaced by one of another expression.

The people regarded his lordship's movement as a jest, permitted by the rules of the dance, to separate and disconcert the lovers; and a jest being always well received by the Irish people, particularly from a superior, his good-humour in thus joining in the amusements of the evening, notwithstanding his fall in the morning, helped him on wonderfully as a candidate; and he was rewarded by shouts of laughter, and cries of "Warringdon for ever! success to him! high for the English lord!"

"He's a fine, cliver gentleman," observed the Mc Alpine servants; "I'd be glad the masther would vote for him; he has no pride nor concate about him at all."

"Thrue for ye!" cried Jim Naughton; he's a ra'al gentleman, every inch of him;—he made me a compliment of a five-pound

note, for dhrivin' him up here; and though he thought (the crature) 'twas all my fault he stuck in the bog-hole, an' his bones broke a'most in comin' along, devil a word he said cross, or out of the way, to me; and before he set out, breakin' his heart laughin' at one thing or other, jokin' with mysel', you'd think 'twas his born brother I was, faith, you would. Pat Sullivan, I hope," he continued, turning to Peggy, and whispering, in order that Pat Sullivan might not overhear him, "I hope it's him she'll marry, an' not Misther Mc Alpine, with his big, yallow teeth, an' poor, little, miserable, squeezed-up, starved, carcase; like a weazel he is, for all the world, an' nothing but skin an' bone, no substance in him at all; the English lord would make two of him, Peggy. By my conscience! if I was a young lady, I wouldn't look at him, itsel', let alone marrying him: and he's a great negur, as ever you seen, in his own house, Peggy."

"A-thin, is he, Jim? well to be sure, an' them tinants of his, that does be braggin' so out of him, what a fine house he keeps, an

how he's like the masther, for all the world — evermore giving, giving."

"Oh, the liar of the world!" cried Jim; "like the masther, indeed! they must be the divils, intirely, if they say that. The time I druve the officers' ladies there, you know, Peggy, an' that I smashed my pole, an' druve 'em without a tatther of a pole, good or bad; you remimber hearing tell of that, Peggy?"

"To be sure I did;—sure the whole counthry was talking of nothing else," replied Peggy.

"Aye?" said Jim, smiling with much self-complacency; "well, my dear, he wasn't plased because mysel' and my horses was stoppin' at the house, waitin' till I'd mend my pole. I heerd him axing Tom Lanidigan, his body man, what I was doin' in it, so long. Like the masther, indeed! that supposin' you war the devil, out of hell, not to talk of a dacent boy, if you stopped in it a year would think t'was too soon you were goin' away,—bad manners to themsel's an their companions, the liars of the world! he's no more like the masther than I'm like the Lord Leftenant, Peggy."

CHAPTER IV.

Lady Anne and Maria were overwhelmed with business for some days, making preparations for the party—settling whom they must invite, and whom they need not—those they should ask to dinner, and those they could not possibly have room for—those to whom they should offer beds, and those whom they might leave to the care of their guardian angels on their return homewards, &c., &c. The party being given in honour of the canditate, it was of course necessary to invite the principal constituents of the county, unfortunately, many of the principal constitu-

ents of the county had nice pretty daughters, or sisters, or wives. How then was Lady Anne to reconcile attention to her guest's interest with her maternal anxiety for her daughters?

"I am sadly puzzled, Maria:" said she, "I *must* ask the men; and yet it don't always suit me to ask the women — I can't ask the men without the women, I am afraid?"

"Oh yes, you can—whenever there are pretty girls you don't choose to ask, tell them you have no beds to offer, they will understand that perfectly—everybody knows it is easy to make up a barrack room for the men—one can stow them any where, but that one can't dispose so unceremoniously of ladies; at any rate one couldn't ask whole families in the lump, that way—one must make some selection when one has half a county to be civil to, and that being the case, you can easily manage to pick out the ugly or vulgar girl of a house—the compliment is equally felt by the family; the pretty sisters will be disappointed, to be sure, but the father and mother as well as herself, will be charmed with your kindness."

"Very true:" replied lady Anne—"and we must ask the catholic Bishop and O'Reilly, to dinner, to give Warringdon the better opportunity for conciliating them—*they* have no women, thank God."

"Don't forget the Colonel and field officers, and a few Captains or so, of the regiment—we want the band—and military men always set off a party so much:" observed Maria.

"Remember," said lady Anne, "that we write to Kitty Mc Alpine."

"Oh, by all means, she possesses, in perfection, the requisites for admittance; her brother in petticoats; ugly enough in all conscience:" laughed Maria.

"We may ask all the lady Pembertons, I think, Maria."

"Oh yes, all—it would take one a century to decide which was the least hideous."

"What shall we do about the Ryans? the girls are both exceedingly pretty."

"Yes, but they are also exceedingly vulgar:" answered Maria.

"Ah, very well, I forgot that. Now, about Eliza Fitzgerald. I am sadly annoyed. I can't possibly avoid having a bed for *her*.

Mr. Fitzgerald, member for the connty, and friend and colleague of your father; and yet *she* is a beautiful, accomplished, elegant-minded young woman."

"Yes, but she isn't fashionable—knows none of the people whom everybody who is somebody knows."

"Her figure, my dear Maria, is splendid—there she has decidedly the advantage over Isabel—in other points the attractions are balanced; her features are more regular, but the expression less engaging, than Isabel's; but her person—I repeat, impossible not to be struck by her."

"Granted," replied Maria, "but she's deep blue indigo. Do you imagine that all the beauty, accomplishments, and majesty on earth would atone in Warringdon's opinion, or, indeed, in that of any man, for the high crime and misdemeanour of reading Greek, and what is worse, talking of it? by the way, you appear to me to give yourself an immensity of needless trouble, picking out ugly girls for him—he would no more marry one of these pretty nobodies than he would fly."

"You don't call Miss Fitzgerald a nobody, my dear Maria."

"I don't call her a nobody *positively*, but relatively she is—nobody in town knows her—so she will be nobody to our Viscount. Besides you ought to know by this time that it isn't quite so easy a matter to make young men fall in love with every pretty girl they see."

"I am not afraid of his falling in love with her—but I am alarmed lest his admiration be diverted from Isabel by seeing beauty of another kind—the great thing is never to suffer a man to see what is capable of dividing his attention. Let Warringdon find Isabel superior to all around her, and he will fancy her superior to all he ever saw before. I see I'm making way with him, and to lose him now after all the trouble I have been at, would be really dreadful, you are sure I need have no apprehensions about Eliza Fitzgerald?"—

"None upon earth:" replied Maria.

Lady Anne still pondered.

"Well," said Maria, laughing, "not convinced yet?"

"Oh yes, I am easy now; that is, about Isabel."

"What are you uneasy about then?"

"I was thinking of you, my love."

"Of me! what about me?"

"Why, I was thinking," replied Lady Anne, "whether it were possible she could do you any harm, by interfering with Barham."

Maria again laughed—

"Lord, mamma, what a bugbear you make to yourself of Eliza Fitzgerald! the idea of her interfering with poor Barham—she, up in the clouds, hunting sublimity, and he in the kitchen, looking for fun! Why, she will talk to him about an Epic poem, and he will ask her for a droll story, and then they will fly off at a tangent."

"Perhaps so;" said Lady Anne, "my mind is now quite at ease; by the way, I think Barham begins to like you."

"Not he! he doesn't care a pin about me."—

"He is always running after you, I know."

"Yes," replied Maria, "as he does after father John, to be made laugh."

"He must be a sad bore to you, my dear Maria."

"Yes, I find this courting of mine *tant soit peu ennuyant*, but it can't be helped."

Invitations were despatched all over the county, and great was the commotion excited, and various were the reports circulated as to the precise motive whereon was founded the giving of this said ball. Some said it was an electioneering party — others said it was a marriage party—and a third group insisted that it was to unite both: that is, as a com pliment to Lord Warringdon the canditate, and Mr. Mc Alpine the son-in-law, at one and the same time. Vehicles of all descriptions were put in requisition, from the carriage-and-four down to the jaunting car; nay, some did not disdain even a common peasants "car," for once in a way, to convey their daughters to a ball at "the Castle," and to a young rich wife-less English lord; for the fact of his celibacy had spread like wild fire through the country.

"You must all put into the lottery, young ladies. Lord Warringdon is not married yet:" said Lady Anne, either *vivâ vocé*, or by means

of a pretty little billet, to all her prime favourites: to wit, all the cross-eyed, red-haired, *brogueaneering* young ladies of her acquaintance—so not a girl among them but rose the morning of the eventful day a viscountess in anticipation.

And upon the said morning, Lady Anne sent all her gentlemen out to ride, immediately after breakfast, in order, as she informed them, to turn the house out of windows comfortably during their absence. The viscount outstaid the rest of the party, and only returned in time to take luncheon and dress for dinner;—as soon as the last operation had been effected, he descended to the drawing-room, where he found a large party assembled—chiefly gentlemen; and among the number were two whose appearance struck him as being more courtly than any he had yet seen in the county of———. The elder, a dignified, intelligent-looking man, was standing at the window, talking to Mr. Wilmot, who listened to him with much deference. The younger was sitting near Isabel, speaking earnestly with her, while she appeared quite engrossed by his conversation; occasionally

lowering her eyes and blushing, as he made some observations in a seemingly playful tone: and Lord Warringdon remarked that the blush was accompanied by a smile, and that the eyes were withdrawn only for a second, or two, and then raised up again to those of her companion. And his lordship also observed that the eyes last alluded to were superb dark ones; and that their owner had brilliant teeth, and a very fine expression of countenance into the bargain.

"Devilish good looking fellow," he muttered; "perhaps this is the man she likes, and not me. If he be a lover (and what other liaison can there be between such a handsome man and such a pretty girl), he is certainly an accepted one; his manner is so gay and secure,—hers so easy and confidential;—that of both so good-humoured and friendly, nay, affectionate:" and, as he cogitated thus, he bit his lips, and knit his brows, settling in his own mind that the elder gentleman was father to the younger.

Lord Warringdon had studied, unobserved by them, the two groups we have noticed; in fact, his entrance into the room was not ob-

served, until Lady Anne's keen eye discovered him, and drew her husband's attention to his noble guest.

"My love, you forget that this is the first time that Lord Warringdon and the Bishop have met."

"I beg ten thousand pardons, my dear lord," said Wilmot, turning round, "I was so absorbed in politics here, that I did not perceive you; allow me to introduce my particular and valued friend, the Catholic Bishop of —— to your lordship."

"*He* can't be the father, then," thought the viscount, as he bowed his most gracious bow, and smiled his most insinuating, vote-asking smile.

"O'Reilly, where are you?" cried Mr. Wilmot.

The handsome stranger advanced.

"My Lord, permit me to present to you another friend of mine,—Mr. O'Reilly."

Lord Warringdon smiled and bowed, less graciously, however, than on the former occasion; and he observed that the stranger looked over at Isabel, and smiled also, and that she returned his smile, slightly colouring.

"If you have any friends at Rome, my lord," said Mr. Wilmot, "Mr. O'Reilly can, perhaps, give you intelligence of them; he is just returned from the imperial city, laden with music, poetry, painting, cameos, and enthusiasm."

"And good-nature, I beg you will add," interrupted O'Reilly, "for permitting you to laugh at me thus, without quarrelling with you."

Lord Warringdon had not much leisure for indulging in speculations concerning Mr. O'Reilly, as he was obliged to play the amiable to the "good interests" scattered in groups round the room. He had to laugh and chat with those he already knew;—bow and smile to, and compliment those whom he saw for the first time, such as Lord and Lady Templemore, and the five Lady Pembertons, Mr. and Miss Fitzgerald, and the Colonel of the regiment; "that he might not be extreme to mark what was done amiss" in the rioting way, when, with heads full of whiskey, and hands of shilelahs, the freeholders of the county should rush to the onslaught, to decide whe-

ther Lord Warringdon or Mr. Archer were the most fitting man to represent them.

At length dinner was announced. Lord Templemore handed down Lady Anne: Mr. Wilmot gave his arm to Lady Templemore, and Lord Warringdon, just as he was looking about for Isabel, was requested by Lady Anne to take care of Lady Mary Pemberton: Mr. Mc Alpine offered his arm to Isabel, but Lord W. remarked that she affected not to see it, and, unasked, placed her arm within O'Reilly's. At table the Viscount was flanked on the one side by the Bishop, on the other by Lady Mary; just opposite to him was Isabel, between Mr. Mc Alpine and Mr. O'Reilly: she was in her best looks, all grace and animation, laughing and chatting with O'Reilly.

"The confounded little flirt," muttered his lordship, between his teeth, as he turned round to see if he could not employ his time as agreeably with his companion as she was doing with hers. Of this lady he had had but an imperfect glimpse in the drawing-room, so he was but ill prepared for what he now saw in the full blaze of light, viz., a pale, cross-eyed, white-haired girl, with a neck

rivaling in length that of the far-famed giraffe of the *jardin-des-Plantes*.

"Devilishly impertinent of Lady Anne to place me near such a scarecrow as this." He surveyed the table;—there was not a face, within view, worth looking at, except Isabel's; the female party, being, in fact, almost made up of married women, only three girls among them: namely, the flirting Isabel, right opposite to him, as has been mentioned; Lady Mary Pemberton, close at his side, too ugly for him even to take wine with; and Miss Fitzgerald, who, sitting at a distance, at his side of the table, he could not see at all.

His lordship felt and looked much disconcerted; and his ill-humour was not a little increased by having, more than once, detected a scrutinizing glance of O'Reilly's provokingly fine eyes directed at himself; after each of which critical regards, Mr. O'Reilly would turn and say something in a low voice to Isabel and Isabel would blush, and he would laugh gaily: and, added to all this, his lordship's audacious, yet sportive, analyzer, would again smile across the table, into his lord-

ship's very eyes, and, in a kind of triumph, as it were, insupportable to his vanity.

"Curse him and her, too!" muttered the viscount: "the artful little devil: I always heard that Irish women were the most confounded flirts upon earth, and, judging by Miss Isabel Wilmot, I am certain it is a true saying: the idea of making *me* a *pis aller*, —a somebody to flirt with, just to keep her hand in, when nobody she liked better was here! and to be so near caught by her apparently guileless, unsophisticated character, and devoted affection! It was God's mercy, I did not, in a moment of weakness, make some foolish speech I could afterwards have cut my tongue out for having made; she is telling him a pack of lies, this moment, I dare say, about my admiration of her; and making prodigious sport with him, for having continued constant; but I'll spoil her game, that she may depend on: I'll not ask her to dance, even, I am determined: confound her, again! I never saw such a piece of deceit in all my life."

The Catholic Bishop had to repeat an observation twice to this candidate for one of

the most catholic counties in Ireland, so completely was the politician absorbed in the man.

He, the dangerous Warringdon! for whose attentions the loveliest and most fashionable were contending, to be placed by a gawky fright, nobody knew, and the beauty of the company sitting opposite, her whole heart, tongue, and eyes engrossed by another! It was an insult not to be borne!

"Have you secured Mr. Mc Alpine's interest, my Lord?" enquired the Bishop, for the third time.

"Oh, yes; he and Lady Anne intend this; he shall marry her,—but"

"I beg your pardon, my Lord," interrupted the Bishop, smiling, "that is not an answer to my question: I was not asking whether Mr. Mc Alpine intended bestowing himself on Miss Wilmot, but whether he intended bestowing his votes on your lordship."

"A thousand pardons, my lord, I misunderstood," returned the Viscount, colouring with indignation against himself, for the unconscious and unintentional proof he had just given of the engrossment of his thoughts.

"No:—I have repeatedly sounded Mr. Mc Alpine, but have never yet been able to elicit any thing specific in the way of a promise. Lady Anne tells me, however, that he expresses himself to her favourably towards me; and that he approves my line of politics; and he throws to me, himself, hints about two brothers, three brothers-in-law, and half-a-dozen cousins in want of places, sinecures, if possible! and I promise to storm the treasury for them; but still, some way or other, I can't bring him to the point."

"No; I dare say not," returned the Bishop; "Mr. Mc Alpine is a sad, slippery gentleman, in canvassing the county, I am sorry to tell you: his vanity, as well as his interest, will prevent his declaring himself till the very day of the election; for, besides making better terms for his votes, he will show that, whatever side he throws his interest into will kick the beam, and he will have the credit, as well as profit, of being the casting voice. Mr. Wilmot could tell your lordship curious stories about him;—he has always had more trouble with the Mc Alpine interest than the whole county put together."

"What do you say, my Lord, with regard to a contest?" asked Lord Warringdon. "I was led, at first, to suppose there would be none; but, within the last week, I hear that Mr. Archer is determined to stand; for that he has married an English wife, and no longer wants the sinews of war."

"That is all true," observed the Bishop; but money cannot, in this county, supply the want of interest: we take an equivalent for our votes, indeed, but we don't exactly sell them for hard cash. Now, Mr. Archer stands almost exclusively, as you are, of course, aware, on the Orange interest; an interest you also know, which, in this county, is in the ratio of one to a hundred. I understand he has been coaxing Mr. Mc Alpine, but has not, as yet, obtained a promise of marriage, no more than your lordship; and, unless backed by him, he cannot come to the poll; he has not even ground to stand upon."

Here the Bishop's voice was drowned by a peal of laughter from one of the side tables, at which Maria presided, and around which she had collected a band of choice spirits, composed of young men who had good inter-

ests, young ladies anxious to stand well with young men of good interests, and a few officers reported to be sons of men of fortune.

Cries of "Capital! Bravo! Miss Wilmot, upon my soul I never heard a better thing! Miss Wilmot, I give you credit for that! you are a larking girl! you are a knowing one!" were vociferated amidst shouts of laughter, to which, however, Mr. Barham did not lend a note; and a gentle tittering, accompanied by exclamations of, "How droll! how pleasant Miss Wilmot is!" proved satisfactorily to the company that Miss Wilmot's wit, though so noisily applauded by the gentlemen, nevertheless, was not of a description to shock the ladies of the party.

We would fain hope that our gentle reader takes sufficient interest in our fun-hunting friend, Mr. Barham, to regret his absence from the laughing band, and to have felt both regret and surprise at a fact so inconsistent with the above-mentioned gentleman's usual line of conduct. Nor do we hesitate to doubt that our said gentle reader is busy in conjectures as to the why and wherefore of this extraordinary circumstance. "Has the poor

young man met an untimely end? tumbled over a precipice, or tumbled into a bog-hole? has he fallen a victim to the typhus, (cholera was not then in vogue,) or to a fit of laughter? In a word, what has become of him? something must have occurred. He never surely would voluntarily have quitted the festivities of Castle Wilmot; and if at Castle Wilmot, he would as surely have made one at the merry side-table party." In this manner do we imagine our reader to cogitate—and we feel considerable pleasure in being able to relieve his mind of all anxiety concerning our good-natured friend. He has been neither "clifted nor bogged," neither dead of typhus fever, nor of laughing. He is at Castle Wilmot, although not one of the side-table party—and the only reason he is not there is that he is somewhere else—to wit, at the principal table, seated, by Lady Anne's arrangement, near Miss Fitzgerald. "Nothing like contrast," thought her ladyship — and her ladyship thought right, "he will relish Maria's funny stories more than ever after Miss Fitzgerald's aphorisms." With peals of laughter, ringing in his ears, this votary of fun was, there-

fore, doomed, sore against his will, to listen to the voice of wisdom from the ruby lips of the fair Eliza. Understanding from Lady Anne that Mr. Barham was a young man of fortune, fresh from the university, Miss Fitzgerald, having associated, it appears, very little with young gentlemen from college, imagined she should have a delightful chat on classical literature with Mr. Barham, and receive some learned elucidations of passages which had puzzled her.

"Pray, may I ask," she said, in the sweetest of sweet brogues imaginable, "may I ask you, Mr. Barham, whether you consider Bloomfield's edition of Æschylus a good one, or whether you would recommend any other?"

"Oh, I'm sure I don't know," replied Barham—"I think one edition is just as good as another; I never could see any difference for my part."

"Perhaps not in the text, but with respect to the commentaries; you surely find some of them much clearer, fuller, and more satisfactory than others?"

"I declare I don't know whether they are or not, for I never read any:" he replied.

"Of course you would not require the same explanations that I should, but still there are so many difficulties arising from allusions to national customs, and expressions and political events, the influence of which, being confined within narrow limits, although at a former time of local importance, have not fallen under the notice of the Historian;—and these points would be obscure to the most perfect clasical scholar.—How much we are indebted to the scholiasts! but for those learned men, how little of the ancient literature would have descended to posterity!—Oh! long ago, the greater part of it must have been consigned to oblivion!"

"You are quite right, Miss Fitzgerald,—I wish to heaven it had," cried Barham who had heard only the last sentence of the foregoing speech;—his attention during the first part of the harangue having been engaged in conjecturing what funny story Miss Wilmot could be telling.

"You are quite right; I should be devilish glad, I assure you, that every Greek and Latin book in the world had been lost long ago,—stoopid pack of trash!"—

Miss Fitzgerald opened her fine eyes in amazement.

"Oh, Miss Fitzgerald, you are Irish. Will you do me a great favour?"

"If it is in my power," politely answered the young lady; though not now hoping, as some minutes before she had done, that the favour asked would be a request to be permitted to look at her Italian translation of Xenophon's defence of Socrates; a morceau of which every body acquainted with the Fitzgerald family had heard;—and as the Fitzgerald family included half the county, Miss Fitzgerald thought that it included half the world.

Mr. Barham might, however, entreat her to favour him with a little music by and by;—he had heard doubtless of her proficency as a pianiste.

"What is this favour, Mr. Barham?" said she.

"Oh! that you would tell me some droll story to make me laugh, like Miss Wilmot,—will you? I should be so much obliged to you!—They shant have all the laughing to themselves at the other table, shall they?—

Miss Fitzgerald was absolutely petrified, she, the best pianoforte player; the best French and Italian, and the only Greek, scholar in the county; to be asked to tell funny stories, to make people laugh!—

"I never tell funny stories, Mr. Barham," she replied, giving him a look that would have done honour to Minerva herself, so fraught was it with wisdom and indignation.

"Oh, dont you?" he ran on?—"What a pity!—I took into my head, some how, you were quite an Irish girl;—never having been out of Ireland, as lady Anne told me;—so I made sure I should find you as funny again as Miss Wilmot."

"Now, we are told comparisons are always odious, but of all comparisons those between ladies are the most odious,—and if there be such a thing as the superlative of a superlative, the comparison just made was, to the person addressed, the most odious of the most odious. The greatest insult, in fact, that could be offered to Eliza Fitzgerald was to compare her with Maria Wilmot, whom she envied for her popularity, though she despised the means by which she had attained it; dis-

approving, at the same time, her conduct, and resenting her ridicule.

"What a senseless, tasteless, inane young man!" thought Miss Fitzgerald.

"What a stoopid girl she is, to be sure!" muttered Mr. Barham, as he turned from side to side, and leaned back in his chair, in imminent danger of dislocating the dorsal vertebræ, so great was his eagerness to catch a word of what was going forward at the side table. The conversation between this well-matched pair began to flag, and soon ceased altogether.

Shortly after, the ladies withdrew, to the infinite delight of the gentlemen, and to their shame be it spoken.

For some time after, the candidate drank, and laughed, and listened to stories, "capital stories;" did all in his power, in fact, to appear a right good fellow. As soon, however, as he could do so, with propriety and due attention to his reputation, he effected his escape to the drawing-room; the bishop and Mr. O'Reilly, he perceived, having previously made their retreat.

Loud peals of laughter pursued him al-

most to the drawing-room door; but, just as he was about to enter it, sounds of a different nature met his ear, that is to say, the soft, clear notes of a female voice, supported and strengthened by the mellow tones of a deep, rich tenor, modulated into the most exquisite harmony.

"Who can these be?" thought he. He went in, and saw that the singers were Isabel Wilmot and her admirer, Mr. O'Reilly.

Now, strange as it may appear, it was the first time he had ever heard Isabel sing. Her mother, aware how much the impression, in those cases, depends upon surprise and effect, had always discovered that her daughter had a cold, or was out of voice, whenever his lordship proposed music; and, by these means, she accomplished two desirable objects; first, the augmentation of his curiosity; second, a proof of her total indifference about shewing off her daughter to him.

Lord Warringdon had a good deal of factitious feeling, of that morbid excitability of temperament which would bring tears to his eyes at a finely-executed air by Pasta, though he might hear, unmoved, of the death of a

friend; on the present occasion, so pleased and touched was he by the singers that he momentarily forgot the sins of the individuals.

"Bravo, bravo! Signora! Bravo, Signor!" he cried.

"Ha!" exclaimed Isabel, with pleased surprise; "'tis you, my Lord? you have left the dining-room early."

"And should have come away much earlier had I the least idea I should have heard such music. Why did you not give me a hint, Mr. O'Reilly, and bring me with you? I have frequently petitioned Miss Isabel Wilmot to sing, but never could prevail on her, however, to do so; but if I had once got in, she could not well turn me out; and then I might have had the benefit of her desire to oblige you," said he, in a cold, offended tone.

"Is this a true bill, Signora Isabella?" demanded Mr. O'Reilly. "Has Lord Warringdon asked you to sing, and have you been churl enough to refuse?"

Here Lady Anne touched Lord Warringdon's arm:—"Just look at Mc Alpine!"

"What for?" asked his lordship, rather ill-humouredly.

"See how proud he looks, poor fellow, of Isabel's performance! She always sings so well with O'Reilly."

"I dare say she does," assented the viscount, significantly.

"Isabel, my love," said her mother, "look out another duett, quick, before the crowd pours in. O'Reilly, you know, don't like singing in general company:" then, lowering her voice, "sing the air Mc Alpine likes so much;—he is quite delighted with you this evening, I can tell you."

Lord Warringdon overhead this, and observed O'Reilly smile, as he whispered Isabel who appeared to hesitate.

"I was just going to sing something Lord Warringdon asked me for," she said, timidly.

"Do as I desire you, my dear," rejoined her mother, in an affectionately peremptory tone.

Mr. Mc Alpine now placed himself in his usual position, when listening to the lady of his love; that is, stretched across the instrument, staring her full in the face, and beating time out of time.

"How that poor girl is persecuted!" ob-

served O'Reilly, in a commisserating tone, to Lord Warringdon, glancing at Mc Alpine.

"How do you know the lady considers it persecution?" asked the viscount, coldly; "unless Miss Wilmot be an exception to her sex, she will not consider admiration as persecution."

"Recollect that admiration, in this case, is coupled with the pretensions of a suitor," said O'Reilly.

"I don't see how that should make the admiration less acceptable; — I always understood the grand object of young ladies was to convert their suitors into husbands."

"Yes," replied O'Reilly, "when they don't happen to like somebody else."

"And pray, who may the happy man be, who is favoured by Miss Isabel Wilmot's attachment?" said the Viscount, sarcastically.

O'Reilly smiled. "Oh, that's a secret, my Lord, I can never reveal till the lady gives me permission."

Lord Warringdon repaid him with one of his searching looks.

O'Reilly hummed a few bars of an old Venetian Barcarolle.

"What a cursed puppy!" thought the noble viscount; "and the mother such a blind buzzard as not to perceive what is going on between him and her coquette of a daughter."

"Isabel, my love," cried Lady Anne, "let O'Reilly hear your harp once more; it used to be his favourite instrument."

Though the harp was close to the sofa upon which my lord was lounging, biting his lips, he never rose to carry it towards its beautiful owner, and the lady and her harp might both have tumbled down, for any thing he cared, in his present mood. "A more impertinent woman than that Lady Anne I never met; if I was a married man, or a half-pay officer, she could not have treated me with more perfect indifference,—more downright disrespect, than she has done ever since I came into her house; she has not even let her daughter play, or sing, for me! upon my word, not a mother duchess in England would presume to treat me thus!"

While he was thus wrathfully ruminating, his attention, spite of himself, was arrested

by Isabel's playing. Her execution was not remarkable for rapidity, but her touch was beautiful, so full and round, yet soft, clear, and bell-like. Then her style was charged with sentiment and delivery, and her expression exquisite, rendered more touching even than usual, by her anxiety to *interest one* in that room whom she perceived, for some cause or other she could not divine, was displeased with her.

The appeal was not made in vain. As we have before said, Lord Warringdon had a good deal of musical feeling. He listened for some time in admiration of the performance, without, however, deigning to look at the performer. At length, he suffered his eyes to rest on the fair musician.

Now, Isabel Wilmot had a very pretty little foot, and a singularly beautiful hand and arm; and the fall of her shoulders was always considered peculiarly graceful; for all these good reasons her mother had selected the harp, as her instrument; and, for the same good reasons, Lord Warringdon thought, as he now gazed on her, that Lady Anne had evinced much judgment in her selection. "A

man might love such a creature as that," said he to himself, "if she were not such a confounded little flirt!"

Carriages were heard rolling round to the entrance, and a general movement took place, which disturbed the current of his lordship's thoughts, or probably, he might have ended, by perfectly reconciling himself to the fair Isabel, and have been induced, even contrary to his determination, to open the ball with her.

As soon as the music struck up, Mr. Barham and all the young officers, and as many of the country gentlemen as had heads in dancing condition, made their appearance in the drawing-room.

"Oh, Miss Wilmot, such fun as I have had!" said Mr. Barham, holding his sides, 'ready to die;' "such fun! Mr. Molony has just knocked me down."

"Knocked you down! why, how did it happen?"

"Oh, not in earnest, you know; he was just shewing me how he knocked down Mr. Mc Alpine, one day, and he fetched me such a thump on my shoulder, that I fell under

the table! ah, I laughed so, I thought I should have died! so Irish!"

"You are not hurt then?" observed Maria.

"No, only a little stiff, but dancing will set me to rights, immediately. Are you engaged this quadrille, Miss Wilmot?"

Maria informed him that she was.

"How tiresome! well, will you introduce me to a partner, then? a funny one, you know."

"I think," observed Maria, "that you ought to dance with Miss Fitzgerald, as you sat near her at dinner."

Barham recoiled in horror — "Oh, not if you were to give me a thousand pounds, Miss Wilmot!"

"Upon my word, I pity you much:" Maria said, laughing: "Why, Miss Fitzgerald, is the beauty, as well as the genius, of the county. She reads Greek, and writes poetry, you must know."

"I don't care whether she does or no:" he replied, rather doggedly — "I got enough of her at dinner, I can tell you. What do you say to her talking all the time about Greek,

and Latin; and when I asked her for a funny story, she stared at me as if I had a hundred heads! Disagreeable girl! I would sooner not dance all night, than dance with her. What laughing you had, all of you, at the other table! How I did wish to be among you! you will not forget to tell me what it was all about to-morrow? Oh! Miss Wilmot, make haste and introduce me to some funny girl or other, for the quadrille is already beginning."

"Will you have one of the Miss O'Higgertys?"

"Oh yes! that's such a nice Irish name! I'm sure I should like one of them."

Maria led him up to the eldest Miss O'Higgerty; daughter to the well-known attorney of that name who, together with his family, were invited ostensibly to secure his services at the approaching election, to Lord Warringdon, but those intimately acquainted with the Wilmots were aware that the fact of Mr. O'Higgerty having some heavy untaxed bills of costs against the Castle Wilmot estate had a considerable share in obtaining for himself and his four bouncing, red-cheeked

daughters, admittance among the "tip-top grandees" of the county.

"I don't like quadrilles and walzes, at all;" observed Mr. Barham, to his partner, "but Miss Wilmot has promised to let us dance jigs by and bye. That will be much pleasanter, will it not?"

"Jigs!" echoed the young lady, with a look of consternation. "How could Miss Wilmot think of such a thing? The idaa! for God's sake, who ever heard of dancing jigs in company?"

"A jig!" cried one—"a jig!" repeated another—and "jig! jig! jig!" ran round the room, in all imaginable varieties of tone and accent, expressive of amazement.

"So you should not like to dance a jig?" continued Mr. Barham. "I wonder at that—I should have thought you just the girl to enjoy it! such a regular Irish name! and such a capital brogue and all!"

The young lady answered with some little warmth—"What an idaa you must have of Ireland, Mr. Barham! good Irish society, you know, is just the same as English—no difference in life—I hope you don't form so un-

favourable an idaa of us as to imagine you would see anything in good society in Ireland different from what you would see in England?"

"Well, I declare, I can't undestand that at all:" replied Mr. Barham. "If I were an Irishmam, I should always be trying to be as Irish as possible. I would dress, and dance, and talk, and walk, and eat, and drink, and live differently from everybody else in the world, so that the moment I came into a room, people would say, I'm sure that gentleman must be Irish. I would just go on the way they do in a play. I would be always swearing, and saying funny things, and fighting duels, and running in debt, and in fact, doing all sorts of out of the way things. My goodness! what's the use of being Irish, if one does just the same as if one was English—so very stoopid that would be!"

"I don't think gentility can ever be stupid;" Miss O'Higgerty replied, with a toss of her head—"at laste according to *my* idaas. God forbid I'd ever see the day that Irish ladies and gentlemen would be different from other ladies and gentlemen—God forbid I'd ever

see them put themselves upon an aquality with the peasantry of the country, and dance jigs! There's rason in everything, Mr. Barham."

Now all this time, Mr. Barham had not been listening to a single word that she was saying; his whole attention having been absorbed watching Maria Wilmot and her partner, (who happened to be his *vis à vis*,) as they talked and laughed together, and he was very sinfully envying their gaiety, and puzzling his poor brains in conjecture as to what it was all about.

Lord Warringdon, much to his surprise during the evening, had not observed, among the dancers, the gay admirer of his admired Isabel. Yet he could not have been flirting with her, for she had danced every set. What could have become of him?

The viscount strolled into the card-room, and there he found Mr. O'Reilly, and Lady Anne, talking so earnestly, that he had come close enough to distinguish his own name, pronounced in a laughing tone, by Mr. O' Reilly, before either of them was aware of his approach.

Lady Anne rose. "Can you tell me, my lord, whom Isabel is dancing with?"

"I really did not happen to observe:" he carelessly replied.

For once in his life, at least, the young gentleman did not tell the truth. He knew perfectly well, not only who Isabel was then dancing with, but had observed who had been her partners throughout the evening. Neither had he failed to remark that she had danced languidly. "Because," thought he, "O'Reilly is not near her."

"How comes it, Mr. O'Reilly, that you are not dancing this evening?" Lord Warringdon said, as they now stood together, looking on at a whist party.

"I never dance, my lord."

"You do not like it?"

"Yes, I liked it, when a boy."

"It is not your years, however, that need prevent you now, I should imagine?" said the Viscount, smiling.

"No, not exactly my years; but it is not usual for men of my profession, at any age to dance."

"A young barrister I suppose:" thought

Lord Warringdon. "I was not aware, Mr. O'Reilly, that the Irish bar was under such absurd shackles of *convenances?*"

"Nor are they, I imagine:" Mr. O'Reilly replied.

"Except in proscribing waltszes and quadrilles:" the Viscount answered.

"You have been misinformed in that respect, my lord. Barristers may waltz all night if they please, provided they gain their client's cause in the morning; perhaps, even they have a better chance of persuading twelve sober, steady men out of their senses, from having the evening before succeeded in making fools of a dozen or two of pretty girls."

"Why do you not try its efficacy yourself then?" the Viscount asked.

"I would if the causes *I* had to plead, my lord, were of a nature to be assisted by talking nonsense to young ladies."

"Oh, I see! you are a sober chancery lawyer?"

Mr. O'Reilly looked surprised.

"I thought that your lordship was aware of my profession—I am a Roman Catholic clergyman."

"You!" Lord Warringdon exclaimed, looking in his turn astonished, and not a little pleased also—"You! a Catholic priest! I never should have thought so."

"No? Is my appearance then so very unclerical, my lord?" Mr. O'Reilly enquired, smilingly.

"Hnmph! I don't exactly know how to answer that question. A man need not certainly be a worse priest for happening at the same time to be a good-looking fellow; and singing as if he were in the land of song; and talking to pretty girls; but someway, if I were a catholic husband, I should rather my wife had any other confessor."

O'Reilly coloured, and answered gravely—"If you *were* a catholic husband, my lord, you would know better, I hope, than you seem to do at present what are, and what are not, the qualifications to be avoided in a confessor—and whether Catholic, or Protestant, I hope you may never marry a woman you might not trust with a person more dangerous than myself, even if I were a mere man of the world. But I should think, my lord, that

you need not fear any rival;" he added politely.

The Viscount bowed, and smiled — and after a short pause, resumed the conversation.

"Do you know, that I imagined, you were the accepted lover of the young lady you sat next at dinner to-day."

"Excellent! Oh, come, I shall tell her that directly;" said O'Reilly laughing. "Well, certainly I must have played my *rôle* of confidante to perfection, since I appeared so interested, and sympathizing, as to be taken for the lover himself!"

"But who is this lover?" the Viscount enquired.

Mr. O'Reilly gave him one of those scrutinizing looks which had so much provoked his lordship during the former part of the day.

"Is it anybody I know?" Lord Warringdon continued.

"You may *think* that you know him, my lord. But, come, come, you must not tamper with the secrets of the confessional, you know—besides, I want to see this fair mistress of mine."

Lord Warringdon took O'Reilly's arm, and they returned together to the ball room.

Isabel was making the tour of the apartments with her partner, on whom, however, she appeared to bestow less than her usual attention, whilst he, on his part, was all assiduity. Lord Warringdon remarked that Isabel frequently looked uneasily around her, as if in search of somebody, and when, at length their eyes met, that hers were instantly withdrawn, and that turning to the young officer, her late partner, (who was, by the way, eldest son of an English baronet, of very large fortune, in the north of England,) she talked, and laughed, and did all in her power to evince perfect indifference to his approach, and although she saw him elbowing his way to her, followed by O'Reilly, never condescended to look at, or smile upon him.

"Will you dance the next quadrille with me?" the Viscount said, in his softest tone, and with his sweetest smile.

"I regret that I am engaged for the whole evening, my lord:" she replied, with a graceful, haughty movement of her pretty head, which Lord Warringdon thought quite be-

witching, her displeasure arising, as he saw clearly, from pique at his previous inattention.

"She has spirit, I see, as well as tenderness;" said the Viscount to himself—and he liked her the better. He would soon have tired of an affection that could not have been piqued. He, therefore, felt, as well as looked, disappointed at Isabel's answer.

"You are not engaged for the whole of evening, surely?" he said in a low, gentle voice. "You must dance once at least with me, or I shall think that I have had the misfortune to offend you; and *that* would give me real concern."

He looked so sorry, and so handsome, that it was quite impossible for Isabel to keep up her dignity any longer.

"If you are disengaged then for the eighth quadrille, my lord, I shall be very happy to dance it with you;" trying to. repeat these words of course, as if they were but words of course to her.

"I cannot but admire the composure with which you dispose of yourself, without asking

my consent:" said O'Reilly, with mock gravity.

"Your consent!" repeated Isabel, "pray why should I ask your consent? I am not one of your flock, am I?"

"Not one of my flock, indeed! don't you know that I have even higher authority over you than that of priest, or confessor—that is to say, the authority of an affianced husband?"

"What on earth, are you talking about?" Isabel asked, with surprise.

"And how is it possible, Miss Isabel Wilmot, that *you* can have the face to deny that I am your lover, the secret and favoured rival of mamma's knight of the castle? you need not mind *le beau viscount* here—for he knows all about it—in fact, he was the first to discover our attachment—so acknowledge the truth at once, and I dare say he will use his influence in our behalf, and induce mamma to consent to our secret union? come, my gentle, blushing, Isabel, *spake* to our friend." And he imitated the tone, and look of Mr. Mc Alpine so perfectly that, notwithstanding Isabel's embarrassment at some of the allu-

sions in Mr. O'Reilly's speech, she joined in Lord Warringdon's laugh. But though somewhat confused, she was also made very happy by this same speech, finding in it a clue to her lover's sudden change of manner towards her.

Lady Anne joined the group.

"My lord, if you are not engaged this set, I wish you would allow me to introduce you to a young lady."

"My dear lady Anne, what else have you been wishing, and doing, all night, than inflicting young ladies upon me? and, by the way, a more diabolically hideous set of young ladies I never had the felicity to encounter. I really must sit this quadrille, or I shall die, and, moreover, have to lay my death at your door. Only think, how it will figure in the Morning Post—'On the 25th of this month, died at Castle Wilmot, in the county of — —— Viscount Warringdon, eldest son of Earl Glenville, of a surfeit of ugly partners."

"Oh, come, nonsense," Lady Anne said, laughing, and walking him away. "What does it signify about the daughters' looks, if

you get the fathers' votes? I think it a cheap purchase, for my part.'

"You do? I have not, then, the honour of agreeing with you. But do tell me how it happens that your women are not prettier in this part of Ireland? The men, most of them, are very fine-looking fellows, and have a good, dashing air about them, but the women are plain, and—"

"Come, come, you must not be so ungallant. At any rate, you shall not, this time, have to complain of the want of attraction in your partner, for I am going to introduce you to Miss Fitzgerald, the most beautiful girl in our county."

"Not while your daughter remains in it?"

"Oh, Isabel cannot be termed beautiful;—she is an elegant, interesting girl, but that is all; whereas, Miss Fitzgerald's face and figure are faultless. But, however, many agree with you, in preferring Isabel. Do you know I never could account for the extraordinary admiration she has excited, for I really and unaffectedly have always considered her over-rated. Then, again, Miss Fitzgerald has

much more acquirement than Isabel,—she speaks seven languages,—my daughter only knows French and Italian."

"And abundance, my dear Lady Anne, for any woman to know. French for the ball-room,—Italian for the *boudoir*. I shall bring in a bill into this new parliament to make it felony, without benefit of clergy, for a lady to learn more. These young ladies, of seven-language power, are absolute inflictions."

"She is an admirable classical scholar, too."

"Angels and ministers of grace defend me!" the viscount exclaimed, throwing himself into an attitude. I'll empty all these veins, and shed my dear blood, drop by drop, to please or serve you, but this I cannot, dare not do."

"You ridiculous creature," interrupted Lady Anne, laughing. "Come on,—oh, you must, indeed, or neither she nor her father will ever forgive you."

"Necessity has no law," he said, shrugging his shoulders.

He assumed, however, his most insinuating smile, when he asked the favour of dancing

the next quadrille with Miss Fitzgerald.

Now this young lady was, indeed, not only a profound classical scholar, and admirable pianoforte player, but she was also an enlightened politician, and this branch of her knowledge she now brought forward for the special entertainment and edification of the new canditate, who, however, unfortunately happened to dislike politics as much as Mr. Barham did Greek: all the European governments, in succession, underwent her critical examination, in the intervals of "*avant deux*" and "*chassez croisez.*"

"What a handsome bore that woman is!" said the Viscount to himself, as he resigned the learned Eliza to her new partner.

At length the seven quadrilles, which stood between Isabel and Lord Warringdon's, were got through, and he had just come to claim her, when Lady Anne stepped up to them.

"Oh, my Lord, I want to introduce you to Miss Mc Alpine."

"Impossible, my dear Lady Anne, I am already engaged."

"To whom, may I ask?"

"To Miss Isabel Wilmot."

"Oh, what does that signify?—Isabel can easily find another partner, and she will equally give you credit, for your good intention in her favour. You don't, I suppose, want to make a conquest of her,"—she added laughing.

Lord Warringdon felt the hand on his arm slightly tremble, as Lady Anne thus seemed so quietly to take for granted their utter indifference to one another. Instinctively he pressed the little soft hand, as he replaced it on his arm.

"Oh really, Lady Anne, you must excuse me, this time."

"And, oh really, Lord Warringdon, I can do no such thing," she answered playfully.—"Come away, my dear Isabel, we must not give this lazy candidate of ours any excuse," and she drew her daughter's arm within hers, and walked her off.

"Was there ever such a provoking persecuting marplot?" the Viscount muttered, as he made his bow to Miss Mc Alpine.

The band struck up a waltz, he deposited his hideous one on the first vacant seat, and

looked round for Isabel — whom he discovered at last, Mr. Mc Alpine sitting near her and laughing, as was his custom, on three chairs at once, and rolling his large unmeaning eyes; and just as he was apologizing to her, for not asking her to waltz, being "afraid," as he said, of "throwing her down," (the usual finale of his waltzing enterprises,) and as she was smiling forgiveness, Lord Warringdon walked up to them:

"You waltz, do you not?" he asked.

She nodded.

"Let us be off then, before *la chére maman* makes a re-appearance with a new fright in her hands—one would think all the hideousness of the county had rendezvoused here to-night — come, *la bellina, carina, flirtina;*" he said, playfully putting his arm round her waist.

The whole room was in admiration of the graceful movements of this handsome couple, and none more so than Lady Anne herself, although when they paused a moment to take breath, she asked her daughter in a displeased tone—

"Why are you not dancing with Mr. Mc Alpine, my dear?"

"Because, mamma, Mr. Mc Alpine never waltzes, you know."

"*Allons donc,*" said the Viscount, replacing his arm. But Isabel hesitated, for she saw that her mother was offended.

"Why what is the matter? are you tired?" he asked.

"No;" answered Isabel, colouring. "But mamma does not wish me to waltz."

"Oh, I beg pardon—I was not aware of your mamma's objection to it, or of course I should not have asked you."

Lady Anne continued to bite her lips and play with her fan. Isabel sat down and turned her back on Mr. Mc Alpine, and Lord Warringdon turned his on Lady Anne.

"Confound the woman!" he muttered, as he folded his arms, and stretched out his legs.

"I thought you were going to walz, my lord?" Lady Anne observed, in her sweetest and most guileless manner.

"I was, but your ladyship prevented me:" he answered.

"There are plenty of *valseuses* in the room, besides my daughter; for instance, Miss Mc Clintock, who walzes beautifully — shall I introduce you?"

Now, Miss Mc Clintock had a pair of staring light blue eyes, by no means to the taste of his young lordship, so he met the offer rather coldly.

"I am much obliged to your ladyship, but I have changed my mind, and do not intend waltzing all the evening."

"As you please, my lord;" she replied with offended dignity.

"Mr. Mc Alpine! will you have the kindness to give your arm to Isabel as far as the next room, for I am sadly afraid of her taking cold here."

Poor Isabel was ready to cry from vexation, but how soon would her tears have been converted into smiles, could she have seen the glance of indignation, and offended pride which the Viscount darted at her mother!

During the remainder of the evening, he scarcely condescended even to speak with his hostess, who, in consequence, retired to rest that night, full of the most joyful, and bril-

liant anticipations. O'Reilly had mentioned to her Lord Warringdon's amusing supposition with regard to himself, and thus the ill-humour, which had been observable in his manner during the former part of the evening, was most satisfactorily accounted for. The apathetic Viscount was jealous! the manœuvring mother clapped her hands in delight.

"He must not, however, my dear O'Reilly, be allowed to fritter away his feelings, in the empty attentions and unmeaning gallantries of a ball-room. So I must keep my eye upon him, and prevent his speaking with her this evening; nothing like thwarting, and counter-plotting, for such a temperament as his — in order to give impetus to his otherwise evanescent impressions.— So, if I do not allow him to flirt with her to-night, he will rise to-morrow downright in love with her."

And as our readers may have observed, to this plan she had pertinaciously adhered throughout the remainder of the evening.

CHAPTER V.

Did Lord Warringdon awake the morning after the ball, "downright in love," with Isabel Wilmot?

We do not choose to speak too decidedly on the subject, but our belief is that some progress has been made in causing his lord ship to thaw; inasmuch as the attentions which he had originally paid Isabel, merely to supplant her lover, and outwit her mother, (the person he liked best to outwit, after a husband,) without any ulterior object, beyond the amusement of the hour, he now offered from interest in herself. For the first time in his life, he was sure of having inspired a genuine

and spontaneous affection, wholly unprompted by interested speculations, evidently discouraged as it was by her family; and again, this attachment was so delicately indicated, so dignified by reserve and womanly pride, that he never could venture to presume upon his discovery of its existence.

And how did Isabel awake the morning after the ball?

Why, very happy and very tired—for she had passed the whole night thinking of all that Warringdon had said, and all he had not said, but which he very likely would have said, had not her mother either accidentally, or designedly, interfered to prevent him by never allowing them to remain a moment together.

"Oh yes!" said she to herself, "now I am sure he loves me! for what an instantaneous change took place in his manner, from the time he discovered that O'Reilly was not a rival. Dear, dear Warringdon! generous disinterested Warringdon! how I love you! but I would not for worlds you knew *yet how* deeply! how devotedly!"

Naturally of an affectionate disposition,

and meeting no return of tenderness from her own family, she had a superabundance of love at her disposal, all of which she now bestowed, on the handsome, fashionable, agreeable viscount, quite sure there was in the transaction a strictly honest exchange of commodities.

On the evening of that day, the usual family party, with the addition of Mr. O'Reilly, were assembled in the drawing-room. Mr. Wilmot, and his agreeable reverence, were talking politics. Maria and Mr. Barham trash. Lady Anne and Mr. Mc Alpine sentiment. And Lord Warringdon was sitting near Isabel, making love, or at least, something so a kin to it that she quite spoiled a *papier maché* box which she had intended for her mamma.

These conversational duetts, carried on for some time, in an under tone, were at length interrupted by Lady Anne.

"Well, Mr, Mc Alpine, I will 'take the sense of the house,' upon this motion. Wilmot and Mr. O'Reilly, do leave off counting votes for one moment. Lord Warringdon and Mr. Barham, suspend your flirtations with my daughters, if you please, and give me your

several opinions upon a certain knotty point, which threatens to disturb the hitherto-unbroken amity that has subsisted between Mr. Mc Alpine and myself."

All the gentlemen, except Lord Warringdon, obeyed her commands.

"State the case, Lady Anne," Mr. O'Reil said.

"Why, you must know, gentlemen, Mr. Mc Alpine has the audacity to tell me that he prefers Irish, to English, women! According to him, they are prettier, wiser, better, more capable of loving, and more worthy of being loved; more engaging as girls, more estimable as women; more devoted mistresses, and more attached wives; fonder mothers, kinder friends, and—Heaven knows what besides! In one word, the enumeration of the points of superiority, if noted down, would reach from this to Mc Alpine Castle. Now, is not this too bad? Come, Wilmot, what do *you* say? Which are you for, English or Irish?"

"Oh! I enter my vato (veto) against receiving his vote at all," Mr. Mc Alpine interposed; "for he will judge of English women according to his own exparience, and

attribute to them generally the perfections peculiar to Lady Anne Wilmot."

"Thank you, Mr. Mc Alpine," said Mr. Wilmot, laughing, "for saving me the trouble of making a civil speech to my own wife."

"Well, now the speech has been made for you, pray give us your vote," said Lady Anne.

"Why, that happens to be rather a puzzling sort of vote;—my wife is English, and my daughters are Irish,—how can I decide between them? Now I have it:—I would recommend English women to my own sons, (wishing they may be as happy as myself) and Irish women to the sons of other people."

"Bravo, Signor Padre!" Maria exclaimed. "I like that distinction passing well. Now, Mr. O'Reilly, it is your turn."

"Oh, I have nothing to say to any of you, English, or Irish: and, as my vocation is not that of gallantry, I may be allowed, perhaps, to add, I am not at all sorry for it, inasmuch as I think that man the happiest who thinks least about you."

"What a sacrilageous idaa!" Mr. Mc Alpine cried.

"Oh, capital! I think you are quite right, Mr. O'Reilly. A wife is such a stoopid, cross sort of thing,—always scolding, or advising one! there you must be as sober as a judge; no fun after once a man is married: so I am determined to be an old bachelor,—positively I am!" exclaimed Barham.

"Positively you shall not be, though," thought Lady Anne, and so thought Maria.

"Well, now let us count up the votes. Mr. Mc Alpine gives a plumper to the Irish; Mr. Wilmot appears inclined to split his vote; Mr. O'Reilly and Mr. Barham will have nothing to say to either of us, so I am afraid the Irish have it. Oh, but I was forgetting! Lord Warringdon has not given his opinion yet. Come, my lord, which are you for, English, or Irish?" asked Lady Anne.

She was extremely happy to find that his lordship had not been attending to a single syllable of the previous discussion, so that she had to repeat the conversation all over again.

"Now, my Lord, that I have put you in

possession of this most difficult case, pray let us, at once, have the benefit of your critical and fastidious taste, knowledge, and experience. Recollect, that you are English, and that you are this day the sole champion of your country, for Mr. Barham proves a recreant knight. Now, therefore, Viscount Warringdon, 'for St. George and England?' "

"Recollect, my Lord," Maria cried, "that, although you belong to England, you are in Ireland; that we are two to one here, at present; and that Isabel and I have long nails; so your vote, or your eyes, my Lord;—'high, for St. Patrick and Ireland!' "

"Was ever man placed in a more difficult predicament? Honour, patriotism, and Lady Anne, on one side; gratitude, long nails, and the Miss Wilmots on the other! Fair ladies, thus do I decide between motives and attractions so equally balanced:—I am for English women generally, but Irish women particularly."

"Oh, you mane you prefer English ladies to flirt with, but you would be more sariously attached to an Irish woman."

"*Oui, si elle te ressemblait, belle, bonne et*

spirituelle," the Viscount whispered in Isabel's ear. "Just so, Mr. Mc Alpine," he said aloud.

"Now, I move, that the ladies' opinions of the relative merits of the gentlemen of both countries, be collected;—we are dying to know what they think of us," observed Mr Mc Alpine.

"Let us see: Lord Warringdon and Mr. Barham are English,—Mr. Mc Alpine Irish,—two to one, so I am for the English," Maria said.

"You forget your father and Mr. O' Reilly."

"No, I don't forget them, mamma; but you know, they count for nothing;—the one, a married man, the other a man who never will marry:—they are as if they were not."

"I cannot say that I feel extraordinarily flattered by your vote, Miss Wilmot; the preference, as you admit, being merely accidental; and now, for your sister's," Lord Warringdon said, turning to Isabel. "Remember," he added, "that I was for the Irishwomen, so you must, in common gratitude decide in favour of Englishmen. Now, 'St.

George and England,' again, fair Isabel."

"No, no, my Lord, you gave the lovely daughters of Erin but half your heart,—but I give them the whole of mine; remember *that*, gentle Isabel, and be sure you decide for St. Patrick and Ireland."

"Silence in the court! do not prejudice the minds of the jury," Maria exclaimed.

"I imitate the laudable example of prudence and impartiality set me by Lord Warringdon. So I am for the English generally, but the Irish particularly," said Isabel, smiling.

"*Maligne que dis tu là?*" Lord Warringdon playfully whispered.

Mr. Mc Alpine rewarded the fair speaker with a look of unutterable tenderness; his large white eyes rolling from side to side, like a ship in a heavy gale of wind, and appearing every moment upon the point of fairly tumbling out, "body and bones," as our friend, Mr. Kelly, would say.

Lady Anne thought fit, just then, to challenge the Viscount to a game at chess, hoping that Mc Alpine's vanity, evidently excited by what he seemed to consider a decided expres-

sion of Isabel's preference, might hurry him (if allowed the opportunity) into making his proposals in form, and thus quickening the Viscount's movements. When Lord Warringdon accepted her invitation, she placed the chess-board sufficiently near Mc Alpine and Isabel for him to overhear whatever conversation should pass between them.

The players had scarcely seated themselves, when Mr. Mc Alpine began thus, in a low tone, to Isabel:—

"Yes, you are, indeed, a woman capable of appreciating an Irishman! your preference evinces both sense and taste, such as I should ever expect to find in the most charming of her sex."

"Oh, I did not mean, literally, what I said, Mr. Mc Alpine; I was merely laughing with Lord Warringdon, for I really do not prefer Irishmen."

"You raally do not prefer Irishmen? You are the greatest little rogue in the world!" he said, archly; "as if I did not know what you like better than you do yourself; at laste, better than you pretend," he added, resuming his usual languishing tone. "I am aware

that you have too much taste and romance of sentiment, to be interested by an Irishman of the common run; swaggering fellows, ready to fight every man, and make love to every woman they meet. No, my charming Isabel, my sweet, modest, shrinking lily of the vale!. No, an Irishman of that class could never be the object of a timid and delicate affection such as yours!—But could not my gentle Isabel love a refined and accomplished Irishman?—A man of mind, capable of understanding and appreciating the soft tenderness of her character; one on whom she could lane for support and encouragement; one whose ardour would be tempered with sensibility, and exalted by enthusiasm; one who would repay her devoted attachment with all the intensity of passion, all the elegance of taste, and all the romance of sentiment; one who could brathe (breath) but in the atmosphere of her presence; one who could live but on her words, and whose sunshine was her smiles — Could you not love such an Irishman as that, enchanting crature of love and beauty?" he whispered, grinning a smile of mingled sentiment and archness.

"Really, Mr. Mc Alpine, I——"

A look from her mother cut short Isabel's sentence, and she stopped abruptly, colouring, and embarrassed.

Mr. Mc Alpine smiled with complacency on her timid attempt at a disavowal of her love, and proceeded thus:

"The man on whom you bestow your first and virgin affections must never have loved before he met you—he may have had passing gallantries, but *none* that need excite an unasy sentiment in your gentle bosom; you must be the first woman he ever raally loved; the first he ever sariously contempl*a*ted resigning his liberty to, and committing his honour and pace of mind to; he must be able to say with truth—

"My adorable Isabel—I may have admired others, but I never loved but you—from the first moment I beheld your beauteous form, my fate was saled; for you alone have raalized the romantic idaas and anticipations of my impassioned character; you are the bright, soft dhrame of my soul! the crature of my imagination!—the object of my first, and most passionate aspirations!—Yes! you are indeed

worthy of being the inspiration of poetic fancy; the chosen of a man of mind. Yet, rich as you are in youth, beauty, accomplishments, elegance, refinement, taste, and mind; of gentle birth, and polished manners, surrounded, in a word by fascinations of every description, I should, however, have escaped the thrawldom of your varied and potent charms, if I had not had rason to believe myself the object of an attachment as enthusiastic on your part as upon mine.

"And what man has the right to spake thus, my own fair Isabel? Is it not Mc Alpine? your adoring, and let me hope, not *un*-adored Mc Alpine?—Oh, for the bliss of hearing from your own soft lips this rapturous confirmation of my hopes!—Ah, do let my longing ears drink in the blushing and modest reluctant avowal of your pure and gentle tenderness!—spake, my soft charmer, though it be but a word, one little yes,—to the man who adores you—or a glance will suffice, for I have long been acquainted with the soft language of your bright eyes."

Each time, that unfortunate Isabel had parted her pretty cherry lips, to convey a de-

cided negative to Mr. Mc Alpine's hopes, she caught a frowning expression on her mother's brow, which had enforced her silence; and under this martyrdom of her patience, and feeling:

"You know," continued Mr. Mc Alpine, with a tone, and look, of melting tenderness. "You know what interpretation, gentlemen, on these occasions, are allowed to put on the silence of ladies. Do you not, my gentle, timid love?"

Isabel could endure it no longer,—she bounded from her seat, throwing down the poker and tongs, and trampling on the lamer extremities of her father, Mr. O'Reilly, and two lap dogs, in the precipitation of her retreat, from the voice of love.

"What a modest crature!" tenderly soliloquised Mr. Mc Alpine.

"My dear Isabel! do pray look before you,"—her mother exclaimed.

But the fair fugitive was already at the other side of the door.

"Nay, there she is out into her romantic moonshine,—I know her ways."

"But how very awkward she is some-

times!" Lady Anne continued—"Maria! rub poor little Fido's paw, will you?—I am afraid he is sadly hurt,—'Tis your move, my Lord."

He moved; and moved wrong.

"Check to your King!"—she cried.

He made another move, also a false one.

"Check mate!"—and Lady Anne laughed triumphantly.

"I am so delighted to have beaten you at last!—either I have played better, or you worse, than usual."

Why had the Viscount become so suddenly absent and taciturn? Was he out of sorts, at having been beaten at chess, or was he thinking of Mr. Archer, and the election?

"Maria, I wish that you and O'Reily would sing something," said Lady Anne.

Her daughter joyfully assented, glad to be relieved for a while from the trouble of feeding Mr. Barham with good stories.

"What a pleasant girl she is!" the Leicestershire minor observed to the young Candidate.

"Very!" he answered, musing.

"Pity she is so ugly though, is it not?"

"Ugly!" repeated the Viscount, with a

stare of astonishment.—"Why she happens to be one of the prettiest women I have ever seen."

"Good Lord! do you think so?"

"Why who the deuce thinks otherwise," demanded his Lordship, with a warmth unusual to him. And he relapsed into his former silence and moodiness, and shortly after left the room; Mr. Barham remaining rooted to the spot, lost in wonderment at Maria Wilmot's being considered by Lord Warringdon as one of the prettiest women he had ever seen.

"Well! I am sure I never should have thought of any one admiring her as a beauty. Her eyes are not bad, I think—and she has good white teeth,—but then her skin is horrid brown; and her mouth so very wide, the widest I ever saw, except Mr. Mc Alpine's.—Perhaps 'tis her figure that he admires, some people like large women, but then she is so *very* stout and short, however, he must be right I suppose, for I know that he is reckoned a better judge of a horse than any man at Melton."

While thus cogitating, he had placed him-

self opposite Maria, and remained staring vacantly into her face, during the whole of the time she was singing.

"What on earth can the fool of a boy be thinking of, I wonder!" said to herself the object of his not very flattering ruminations, as she caught his fixed gaze. "A silver penny for your thoughts, Mr. Barham!"

"My thoughts!" he repeated, hesitating and looking more silly even than usual.—"I was not thinking of any thing particular,—I was only just thinking of you and"—

"Much obliged to ye sir," she interrupted, crossing her hands before her, and dropping a country girl sort of curtsey, "thankee, sir, for your compliment.—Thinking of nothing particular, only of me!"

"Oh, you will kill me if you make me laugh so, Miss Wilmot, you do make such fun of one. Well, I will tell you really what I was thinking. I was thinking how well you were looking this evening,—so handsome!" I may as well say so, he thought, as Lord Warringdon says that she does.

"Poor, foolish boy! I suppose he is tipsy," Maria muttered. Why my dear creature, what

is come over you this evening? you are grown quite civil."

"But am I not always civil to you, Miss Wilmot? I am sure I intend to be so to you, and every body!"

"There again!—me, and every body, bless the dear man!—His compliments are like Penèlope's weaving, for he unsays the last moment what he said the moment before,—so you don't care more for me than you do for any one else in the house?"

"Oh, indeed I do, Miss Wilmot, I like you better, a great deal better, than any of them, I like you more than any body I ever knew, except Father John, what a pity it is that priests cannot marry! he and you would be such a nice match! only he is a little too old for you."

"Oh, not at all, if there were no other difficulty than Father John's age, it would be all very well, I would much sooner marry a man old enough to be my father, than I would a person younger than myself,—I could not bear the idea of that!"

"You are quite right, Miss Wilmot,—I wish that every body thought as you do.—

There is Ellen Turner, she was full as old as you, and she wanted greatly to marry me, you know, and a great many other girls too; so you see every body has not such sense as you have, and as for fun, there is nobody like you;—at your ball there was not any girl so droll as you; do you know I was rather disappointed at that night,—first, and foremost, Father John was not there, then no one would dance a jig with me, they were all stiff, and stuck up, like English girls, only they spoke with a brogue, I am sure I never should have taken them to be Irish. Oh, but Miss Wilmot, I had nearly forgotten, you have not told me what you were all laughing at the other day at dinner!"

"I wish to heaven I was once married to him, that I might not be worried in this way, to amuse him!"

She laughed, however, and looked the picture of good humour, while she prepared to gratify her persecuting companion.

And now, we will leave her relating her funniest story, and he laughing his noisiest laugh, and see what has become of the other

couple of lovers; first, however, giving a passing glance at Lady Anne, and Mr. Mc Alpine, who are engaged in a low and earnest conversation; he telling her of the mutual tenderness which subsists between her daughter and himself; and she listening, with all the smiling attention of a mother, whose favourite project has been attained.

CHAPTER VI.

ISABEL did not, indeed, as her mother had conjectured, content herself with flying merely from the room which contained Mr. McAlpine, but also from the roof which covered him; in truth, she never stopped to take breath till she had reached a spot in the grounds, of late her favourite haunt, because it had been admired by Lord Warringdon,—and where she had often sauntered with him—a pretty little walk, (just affording room for two,) in a shrubbery, through which ran a clear, rapid, winding stream. She sunk, feverish and tired, upon a bank, and sat for some time, looking up at the moon, and down on the water, as if

she had come out for no other purpose than to pay them a visit; at length, however, she aroused from her inaction, and began pacing up and down the narrow path, and talking to herself.

"Yes; *my* hour is come. Warringdon loves me, I am sure—but is he sufficiently his own master to be able to follow his inclinations?—and if he be not, what is to become of me?—for now, that McAlpine has actually proposed, my mother will begin her system of quiet persecution. Oh, do I not know her? Though she is aware full well that my wedding this man will be a step to my burial, she will have no pity on me—no remorse—but will smilingly doom me to that most appalling of all horrible fates, companionship for life with a man my very soul sickens at! And then, to love another, oh that cruel aggravation! from my heart I wish," she said, clasping her hands in agony, "I had never seen Warringdon's face!"

"Why?" asked Warringdon, close at her ear.

She screamed faintly at beholding near her the very face she had just been wishing never to have seen,—and

"My Lord," she said, drawing up her graceful figure, "you have acted unwarrantably in thus intruding on me," and was in the act of moving away, when stopped by Lord Warringdon.

"No, no," he said, taking her hand, "you must not go till you have answered my question. Why do you wish that you had never seen me?"

"Oh that I was dead!" she cried, bursting into a passion of tears, and struggling to disengage her hand.

"Nay, dear, gentle Isabel, you must not wish to die, but to live—to live for me!" he said, pressing to his lips the fair hand he still continued to retain.

The young Viscount happened to be one of those people who cannot bear to look upon anguish, though they may have little remorse about causing it—he could not therefore contemplate, unmoved, the unostentatious sorrow of a woman who devotedly loved him, and whom he in return also loved, not devotedly to be sure, but at any rate as well as he could any thing that was not himself.

He had come out to seek her 'he scarcely

knew why, and had found her calling in grief on his name: is it very surprising, then, if, for once in his life, he was guilty of imprudence?

Kind reader, pray imagine half an hour, or thereabouts, spent in assurances of attachment, as sincere for the moment, on the Viscount's part, as on that of his fair companion.

When they returned to the drawing-room, they found Lady Anne and Mr. McAlpine still in close chat; and Maria still talking, and Mr. Barham still laughing.

One glance at the daughter told the mother all that had occurred; and her heart bounded, although her face remained calm as usual.

"I am very much obliged to you, my Lord, for bringing in that naughty girl of mine. Dear child, you should not walk by moonlight; 'tis very unwholesome indeed. You will have such a cold to-morrow, my sweet love! Now, my dear girl, I must insist on your going to bed immediately. Mr. McAlpine —may I trouble you to touch the bell—I wish to know whether there be a fire in her room. Maria, you look pale, my love, after your dancing last night. Go to your beds, both of you, my sweet girls!"

Need we observe that Lady Anne was anxious to break up the party, that she might have an opportunity of eliciting from his Lordship a declaration in form, before he should have had time to sleep off any portion of his present vivid impressions, in the same way as she had just succeeded in entrapping Mr. Mc Alpine into promising his vote. By dismissing her daughters, she also disembarrassed herself of Mr. Barham, who ran after Maria, to hear the sequel of her last story; and of Mr. Mc Alpine, who trailed after Isabel, to have "one last look of her he adored," before he retired to rest.

"God bless you! pleasant dreams!" his hostess said, giving him a significant, affectionate nod.

As soon as she found herself alone with the Viscount, Mr. Wilmot and Mr. O'Reilly being too absorbed in politics to be any restraint on her, she thus opened the attack:—

"Can you keep a secret, my Lord? Mr. Mc Alpine has this evening proposed for Isabel;" and her face beamed with maternal joy and tenderness.

"Indeed! and is he accepted?" the Viscount enquired carelessly.

"Surely!" she replied.

"That is to say, accepted by your Ladyship, but not by your Ladyship's daughter, I take it."

"Why, how do you know?" she asked with well-feigned alarm.

"Only because to my knowledge she has accepted somebody else."

"Somebody else! Impossible, my Lord!—who could she prefer to Mr. Mc Alpine?"

"A very inferior person, I certainly must allow," he replied coolly, "for the object of her preference happens to be my unworthy self."

"You, my Lord!—you must surely be jesting. I never was aware that you admired my daughter, or that she was attached to you—you cannot therefore be serious."

The Viscount repeated his assertion.

"I must say then, my Lord, that both you and she have placed me in a very awkward situation. As for my daughter, her conduct is most shameful and disingenuous; she has suffered me actually to pledge myself to Mr. Mc Alpine; what *am* I to say to him?" and she appeared much agitated and displeased.

"Oh, say merely that you and your daughter are of different opinions with respect to his merit; and that the young lady happens to have bad taste, and prefers me,—that's all."

"Early in our acquaintance, if I mistake not, I informed your Lordship how my daughter was circumstanced; permit me to add, that you have not acted towards me with the openness my confidence merited."

The Viscount looked at her composedly, but said nothing.

"However," she continued, "I leave my daughter free to decide between her suitors; of course her choice concerns herself more than it does me; all I wish is that she had known her own mind a little sooner, and could have spared me the pain of having to undeceive Mr. Mc Alpine;"—then making as it were an effort to be civil, she added, "I trust that you will not attribute any portion of the regret I feel (and which I do not hesitate to acknowledge), at the failure of my favourite project, to a want of personal consideration for your Lordship. I am perfectly aware how many mothers would rejoice in

securing so flattering a connexion for their daughters. But, my Lord, recollect that I have known Mc Alpine from boyhood up to the present moment, and a more noble-minded, amiable being there never breathed! His love for Isabel is absolute idolatry; I could therefore have no doubt of his making her happy. Then again, my Lord, some little selfishness mingled with my other feelings. I was anxious to have my favourite child settled near me, that I might still watch over her with a mother's care; and should, by any possibility, some slight misunderstanding occur in the young *menage*, I could explain and advise, and dear Mc Alpine would have listened to me with all the deference of a son, for he knows I love him like a son of my own. Poor fellow, what a blow this will be to him! I quite dread to meet him!"

"What a long tiresome story about nothing!" said the Viscount to himself.

"Well, Lady Anne, all I can say is that I regret to have been the occasion of disturbing such glowing visions of domestic felicity. I is certainly peculiarly unfortunate that you have not been able to inspire your daughtet

with your enthusiasm for Mr. Mc Alpine. But there is no accounting for the strange fancies of young ladies, sometimes; they do not always see with their mama's eyes, and so much the worse for themselves; but, my dear Lady Anne, it is twelve o'clock!—time for honest folks like you and me to go to bed.—*Bon soir!*"

His hostess held out her hand to him, with a smile grave, but kind, just the smile in fact which a mother gives the man she accepts, but does not rejoice in, as a son-in-law.

CHAPTER VII.

MR. MC ALPINE had been all night dreaming of his Isabel, and was now lying absorbed in blissful anticipations of the happy time when he and the "beloved of his soul," would go sailing about the lake, opposite "the Castle," making love; when the door softly opened, and Tom Landnigan, his own man, made his appearance.

"Is that you, Tom?"

"It is sir, veritably:" answered Tom.

"Is Miss Isabel up yet, Tom?"

"She is, sir. I have a bit of a letter she gave me for you, about half-an-hour ago, sir, but I was loth to disturb you, coming in with it."—

"Ah, that's the way to dale with the women—lave them to themselves, and you see how soon they come running after us! The little rogue is afraid now I am displeased, because I did not follow her out of the room, when she made off from me last night, and thinks to get round me again. My gentle crature, I never could be angry with you, even for a moment:" said Mr. Mc Alpine, to himself. "Tom, open the shutters and give me the letter—and fetch me the warm water, till I dress."

Mr. Mc Alpine carried the perfumed missive of "the lady whom he served," to his lips, and then broke the seal.

Instead of "my adored Peter," he was surprised to read, "my valued friend." He looked at the signature; it was Anne, not Isabel Wilmot; but the similarity of handwriting of the mother and daughter had more than once produced similar mistakes. He, however, read on—

"This is the seventh attempt I have made this morning to address you; I have in vain sought words strong enough to depict my feelings; my affection for you, my indigna-

tion against Lord Warringdon, and my surprise and deep displeasure at my daughter's unparalelled duplicity.

"When you first paid your addresses to her, I had reason to believe her ardently, though secretly, attached to you; I, therefore, did all in my power to encourage your attentions. I find, but too late, that I have misled you, that I have deceived you, in fact, but alas! my noble, confiding young friend, believe me, I was myself deceived, and I regret to add, by my own child.

"On mentioning to Lord Warringdon, in the joy of my heart, last night, the fulfilment of my long cherished hope, namely, the union between you and the dearest of all my children, he acquainted me that my daughter had been for some time engaged to himself; her reluctance, therefore, to answer you a short time before, which we both naturally attributed to mere girlish nonsense and timidity, was, it now appears, occasioned by a consciousness of her unworthy double-dealing conduct by you and myself.

"I have passed a miserable night, and am totally unable this morning to meet you;

overpowered as I am by shame and wretchedness.

"Though I may not call you son, continue to regard me as your friend. Allow me to hope that we may yet meet as heretofore, when the present painful impression on our minds shall have worn away. Meanwhile, my amiable, excellent young friend, accept my fervent prayers for your happiness, and above all, for your wedded happiness with a woman more worthy your generous and romantic feelings, than, I grieve to say, my misjudging and ungrateful daughter has proved herself to be.

Ever believe me,
sincerely and affectionately yours,
ANNE WILMOT."

If the fair writer of the epistle found herself, as she states, totally unable to "depict" her own feelings, we may be pardoned if we confess ourselves equally at a loss to describe those of the reader of it. He laid down the letter, and he took it up again; he rubbed his eyes, and he twisted his night-cap from side to side, as he tried to ascertain whether he

was sleeping or waking. He, the tender, refined, romantic, intellectual, impassioned, captivating Peter Mc Alpine, rejected! and a paltry, titled man of fashion preferred! His astonishment and indignation knew no bounds. At first, he intended leaving Castle Wilmot before breakfast, and not again meeting the undeserving and ungrateful object of his late adoration; but a few moments' consideration convinced him that a ride of seventeen miles, Irish ones, moreover, fasting, would be an exploit equally disagreeable and unnecessary, seeing there was no reason that because he happened to be a rejected lover, he should also be a starved man—so he decided (wisely as we think,) not only on eating his breakfast, previous to his departure, but even of making as good a one as ever he had done in all his life before, whether in or out of love.

"After all," he soliloquized as he descended the stair-case, "'tis worse for her than for me, a great dale. I have ten thousand a year in actual possession. Warringdon's father may live to make an old man of him, and, maintime, he will often be hard run for money;

and as for the men themselves, I flatter myself—" and he grinned with much self-complacency, "no one but herself would make a comparison."

He found all the party, with the exception of Lady Anne, and Mr. O'Reilly assembled. Lord Warringdon and Isabel chatting at the window; she looking very pretty, and he, very, very gallant. Maria, as usual, "killing" Mr. Barham.

Mr. Wilmot and his eldest daughter advanced, and shook hands with their guest—and Lord Warringdon and Isabel bowed.

"Where is Lady Anne and Mr. O'Reilly?" he enquired, in his usual tone.

"Mamma is very unwell, indeed," replied Maria; "so much so that she has ordered her breakfast up to her room: and Mr. O' Reilly was sent for express, very early this morning, by one of his parishioners."

"How funny Mr. Mc Alpine must feel!" Barham observed, in a whisper, to Maria, who had just been imparting to him the domestic intelligence of the day. "If I asked somebody to marry me, and that she would not have me, I should feel so odd, should not

you? but I never intend marrying,—don't you think I am right, Miss Wilmot?"

Maria assured him that she highly approved his determination.

"I am very glad your sister is going to make such a good match! but I wish he had chosen you instead of her:—should you like to be married, Miss Wilmot?"

"No!" replied Maria.

"Oh, but I wish you were, though;—you would keep such a nice, pleasant house! would you not ask me to it, for the sake of old times, and all the laughing we have had together?"

"Oh, whenever I marry, I intend that you shall consider my house as your home, Mr. Barham!"

"I am sure I am greatly obliged to you, Miss Wilmot. I should so like to be at your house! Now, will you promise me one thing? wherever you are married, will you ask me to your wedding? I would come any distance to it."

"I promise you," replied Maria, holding out her hand to him, "that as sure as I shall be at my own wedding, so sure shall you!"

"Oh! thank you, thank you, Miss Wilmot! I hope it will be soon."

"So do I, from the bottom of my heart!" said Maria to herself.

"What a lot of ham and chicken and things Mr. Mc Alpine is eating," Barham continued; "I never should take him for a rejected lover, should you?"

"Have you any commands, ladies and gentlemen, for Mount Pleasant?" Mr. Mc Alpine enquired: "I shall start from here in an hour's time."

"Oh, you must not go so soon, Mc Alpine; stay with us a little longer," Mr. Wilmot insisted, good-naturedly.

"Thank you, I ra'ally cannot. Lord Templemore has been for some time extramely pressing with me to go and see him, and I promised him faithfully I would. when I saw him here the other day: what a pleasant, good-humoured man he is! and his daughters I like of all things, particularly Lady Mary; I danced with her at your ball, and I was ra'ally extramely interested in her conversation; though not strictly handsome, she is a very stylish-looking girl; and has a

great dale of mind;" and he glanced over at Isabel, as much as to say, "you see I don't intend wearing the willow for you."

Lord Templemore had, in fact, for some time been supposed very desirous of bestowing one of his five frightful daughters on his friend, Mr. Mc Alpine. Hitherto, however, the good Earl's generous intentions had been frustrated by Mr. Mc Alpine's own opposition to the scheme; but now, thanks to Miss Isabel Wilmot's blindness, that obstacle was removed; and Mr. Mc Alpine gallopped from the hall-door of Castle Wilmot with the intention of raising one of Lady Pemberton's to the enviable station of wife to a "man of mind."

And now that the stimulus afforded by Mc Alpine's pretensions no longer existed, Lady Anne began to apprehend that the Viscount's passion might cool; she, therefore, decided on leaving Castle Wilmot and removing to the assize town, where the candidate would have so much electioneering business on hand, as to leave him no leisure for repentance or *ennui*. It was, therefore, settled that Lord Warringdon, Mr. Barham, the Miss Wilmots, and their mamma, were to set

off immediately, leaving Mr. Wilmot ostensisibly to send down the freeholders, but, we have reason to think that the motive assigned was not the real one; and we believe that the father of the Miss Wilmots was just as anxious to keep out of sight of the High Sheriff as the young ladies were to keep within that of their two English guests.

CHAPTER VIII.

On the evening previous to the day appointed for the opening of the poll, a small group of gentlemen stood at one of the windows of Lord Warringdon's committee-room, looking out on the laughing, shouting, good-humoured crowd, assembled in the street below.

"There is not a man of Archer's in town yet," said Malony, one of Lord Warringdon's committee, to another gentleman of his party; "he will never come to the poll,—you will see."

"Oh, I hope he will, though," interrupted Mr. Barham, who was leaning half out of the window, contemplating this noisy scene with

infinite glee; "or else I shall lose all the sport, and I may never happen to see another Irish election. What capital fun it must be, to be sure!"

"Aye, faith it is, capital fun indeed!" observed Mr. Malony. "What do you say, my lord," he continued, addressing the Viscount, "to my having carried a dozen messages, on one election, for Mr. Wilmot, and sending six on my own account? He fought five of his, but all mine apologized, — the blackguards!"

"Oh, what famous fun it must be! I hope in goodness there will be a contest, Mr. Malony, don't you?"

"Why, to say the truth, for my own share, I would desire nothing better, but, of course, on Lord Warringdon's account, I wish there may not be one."

"Oh, what harm would it do him!" Barham asked.

"Why, my dear fellow, do you know the expense of a contested election?"

"Psha! what is the use of money, but to amuse oneself? I am sure I would rather spend it on fun than on any thing else in the wrold."

"Well, what do you say now, O'Reilly?" Mr. Malony demanded triumphantly!—"do you still hold out that there will be a contest?"

"Yes,—for Archer's friends speak as resolutely as ever."

"Pooh! they may bluster, but, take my word for it, they will never come to the poll. Hav'nt we all the great interests of the county? and which have they? not even Mc Alpine's."

"Don't be too sure of him, I advise you; Archer has been for the last week at Mount Pleasant, tampering, you will find, with Lord Templemore, and talking over Mc Alpine."

"Talking over the devil, man!" exclaimed Malony impatiently,—"how can he go in the teeth of his promise?—did he not tell Lady Anne and Mr. Wilmot his and their interest should go together?"

"And would this be the first time of his saying one thing, and doing another? Don't you know he is an eel, that can wriggle himself out of the closest tied and most elaborately constructed knot, ever devised by the ingenuity of man?—more particularly on this

occasion, that he has wounded feelings to talk about."

"Ha ha ha!—the deuce mend him! Isabel Wilmot served him right, cursed, prosing fool! but no matter for that, he promised, and there's an end of it;—he can't, he dare not—go back at it. If he owes you a grudge," Mr. Malony continued turning to Lord Warringdon, "in the name of God, why does he not call you out, and shoot you at once;—that would be a handsome, gentlemanlike way of settling the business. But curse it! to break one's promise to a man, because he and you happened to like the same girl, and she chose you rather than him,—*that* would be confoundedly shabby!—I tell you what, my Lord, if I had been in his place, I would have shot you as dead as a door nail; but I would have voted for you all the same, because I promised."

"Ha ha ha! bravo, paddy! shoot him first, and vote for him afterwards! Oh, what a capital bull!" shouted Barham, clapping Malony on the back.

"I did not say so, man,"—Malony replied rather sulkily.

"Oh you did! you positively did!' 'I'd have shot you as dead as a door nail, but I would have voted for you all the same,'—those were your very words; oh 'tis a regular bull!" and Barham rubbed his hands, with delight.

"It is no bull at all, I tell you," insisted Mr. Malony. "Pray why might I not shoot him, and vote for him at the same time?—vote for him first of course, and shoot him afterwards. You should not take a man up till he is down, my good fellow."

"Oh, but you *were* down! the way you say it now is not the way you said it at first,—no no! that's no go. It was a regular bull! so there's no use in denying it. I hope I shan't forget to tell it to Miss Wilmot, what fun we shall have!"

"Take a friend's advice, and make fun of something else," said Mr. Malony slowly and emphatically.

"I don't see why I may not laugh at you, as well as any body else, Mr. Malony?"

"You must not, if I bid you not."

"Oh, yes, I shall though," Barham insisted with boyish obstinacy.

"I tell you once more, that I advise you not," said Mr. Malony, looking very dark.

"Suppose I don't choose to take your advise, what then?" queried Barham.

"Why then I will shew an English ass what he gets by meddling with an Irish bull!" and the tall and formidable Mr. Malony squared his broad shoulders, and scowled from beneath his heavy beetle brows, at the simple wilful boy.

"An English ass!" cried Barham, his smooth, almost childish, face repaying, as well as it was able, the menacing looks of his antagonist: "how dare you call me an English ass?"—and his hand was raised to suit the action to the words, when his arm was arrested by Mr. O'Reilly.

"Nonsense, Barham, he did not mean it—it was only a jest."

"A jest! no no,—I am not quite greenhorn enough to be made believe that a thing is a jest which is not one. Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly, not quite ass enough for that!—Let me go, I say!" and Barham struggled violently,. though ineffectually, in O'Reilly's grasp.

"Malony," said the young priest, who, by virtue of the sanctity of his profession, might venture to approach the tiger in his wrath; "is it worth while to quarrel with a friend for a foolish word?—any man may take a jest,—come; say that you are sorry for the expressions you made use of, and shake hands,—Malony!"

"Mr. O'Reilly, mind your own business if you please, and don't give yourself any trouble about mine," Mr. Malony replied.

"Let me go, let me go!" Barham still continued to vociferate, I want to give him his answer.

"And what might that answer be?" demanded Mr. Malony.

"A pitch into your face!" roared Mr. Barham.

"Now we are quits then!" replied Malony, tossing his glove to Barham. "Any one that wants me," he added, looking at the young Englishman, "will find me at Costelloe's hotel. Good morning to you, gentlemen!" and he stalked out of the room very like an angry turkey-cock.

"You have done a very silly thing, Bar-

ham," said O'Reilly, "to think of quarrelling with the greatest fire-eater in the county, for the sake of a stupid jest, I wish you had not said what you did about the blow, and we might have got you out of it, after all!"

"And pray how do you know, Mr. O'Reilly, that I wanted you to get me out of it?—do you think I am afraid of him?—no,—nor would'nt if he was twice as big and as savage as he is.—I don't care one straw about himself, or his fire-eating, I can tell him. Oh, Lord Warringdon, we are both English, —will you then be my Friend, and take a message for me to him?"

"Why I should indeed be most happy to oblige you, my dear Barham," replied his Lordship, "but you are aware that Mr. Malony is one of my most zealous and efficient electioneering friends; so that I could not possibly act against him."

"Oh, very well, I must only do the best I can;" and Barham sallied forth in quest of a friend, (a friend?) to arrange preliminaries for getting himself shot, or making him shoot another person as soon as possible.

"I must go immediately, and have them bound over," said O'Reilly.

"Do, for pity's sake!" replied the Viscount, "it would be a cursed nuisance," he added, as the door closed after O'Reilly, and he was left alone, "if this Malony should be shot; it would place me in a very ticklish position with regard to my election. Confound the pair of them, they deserve to be both shot for their folly!" and his lordship looked over his memorandum book, to see how many remained on his lists, to be conciliated,—and how, and why—

CHAPTER IX.

"DID ye hear the report, Miss Maria?" asked Pat Murphy, the following morning after he had in vain fidgetted about the room, in hopes of exciting her attention, or that of Lady Anne.

"No, what report, Pat?"

"The one, Miss, about Mr. Barham and Mr. Molony."

"Why, what has happened to them?"

"A terrible thing, Miss — t'was Jim Naughten tould me, an' he has a good right to know, wherein, t'was himsel' that dhruv him—he couldn't think what in the world was the matther whin Misther Costelloe called

him out of his sleep this morning, and says he to him, Jim, says he—"

"Oh, never mind, Pat," interrupted Maria, "what Mister Costelloe said to Jim, only tell us at once what Jim said to you."

"Sure, Miss, that's what I'm doin' — all I'm tellin' you is what Jim tould me."

"'Jim,' says Misther Costelloe, 'get up this minute, an' dhrive as fast as if the divil was at your heels, to the barracks, for Misther Barham that's goin' to fight a duel with Mr. Molony, beyant at Kilmore, at break o' day."

"Good heavens!" exclaimed Lady Anne, "Barham gone to fight with Malony! 'Tis all over with us, my dear Maria," she added, in a low voice; "and after all the trouble we have had! It is really too provoking."

"Bad enough," replied Maria, in the same tone; "however, you know all is not always lost that is in danger. Come, Pat, finish your story, and as quickly as you can."

"I will, Miss."

"By the powers, then, says Jim, I'm goin' to dhrive a man I'll niver dhrive agin any how; the crature, if it's wid Mr. Malony he's

goin' to fight, Misther Costelloe; for he's the divil itsel' wid the pistuls, the greatest fire-ater in the Province, barrin' the masther."

"Och, Jim," says Mr. Costelloe, "who is there we'd think of comparing with Mr. Wilmot, in regard of fire-ating; he's the wondher of Ireland, not to talk of the Province, Jim."

"You never seen a man, mee lady, fondher of another than what Mr. Costelloe is of the masther;—and good right he has, troth;—isn't it the masther made him what he is? and Mrs. Costelloe fondher agin, an'—"

"Oh yes, I am sure they are, Pat, as fond as possible of my father, and we are greatly obliged to them, but go on, and tell us what has become of Mr. Barham," interrupted Maria, rather impatiently.

"Well, Miss, Jim got up, and dhruve Mr. Barham, and his second, Capt. Williams, the fine cliver-looking gentleman that was up at the Castle the night of the ball, you remember, Miss? an Englishman, with big whiskers. Well, Father O'Reilly thought to bind 'em over, an' sint to Costelloe's to thry and catch 'em; but, faith, Misther Malony was too many for him; and he hid himsel' and Misther

Barham between the matthrasses of one of the beds, and there they were suffocating, an' afeard o' their lives they'd be nabbed, but by great good look they warn't; not but, indeed, Misther Barham a'most ruined it all by his foolishness, laughin', so, you'd think the life would lave him, shakin' undher the bed, an' Misther Malony fit to be tied, he was so mad wid him, but not darin' to spake, for fear would the pace officers hear him. Well, as soon as they wint, he made Misther Barham go sleep at the barracks, to be out of harum's way, an' he wint himsel' to a frind of his at Kilmore, to be on the spot airly."

"Well, and how are they both now, Pat?" demanded both ladies at once, taking advantage of the narrator's stopping to draw his breath.

"Faith, mee Lady, badly enough. Misther Malony is kilt as dead as a herring, and Misther Barham is lying, not expected to live, at a small public house Father O'Reilly brought him to."

"Heavenly Powers!" exclaimed Lady Anne.

"I never believe half what I hear;" observed Maria. "What was the quarrel about, Pat?"

"About a lady, Miss."

"A lady!" cried Maria, "what lady?"

"Pat, order the carriage! I will see O'Reilly immediately, that is the only way of ascertaining the truth of the story."

"If he should die?" said Lady Anne.

"It would be a bad business:" answered Maria.

"Deplorable, indeed!" sighed Lady Anne.

She stepped into her carriage, and drove off.—

The streets were thronged with Castle Wilmot freeholders hurrahing, and shouting "Warringdon for ever,"—Jim Naughten's report of the English lord's generosity, and of his being in "every perticklar, the thruth of a gintleman," (in support of which assertion, the compliment of the five pound note was not forgotten,) had already secured him an overwhelming majority of the dhrivers, butchers, grocers, and butchers' and grocers' boys, waiters, ostlers, carmen, beggars, and such like gentry of the town—and Jim was now flying about in all directions, waving his hat, and jumping over his stick, collecting his boys,

and exhorting them for the honour of God, and of their town, to be sure and break the head of every Archer, who should dare shew himself in their free, loyal, and religious streets.

Here might be seen groups of gentlemen, gesticulating and thumping one another's shoulders, in their eagerness to prove, for the hundredth time, a position already admitted as incontrovertible; viz., the superior wisdom, valour, and social importance of every individual composing the party to which they belonged, and of the consequent certainty of their triumph. A little further on might be observed some member of the Roman Catholic priesthood, more quietly, but not less zealously, haranguing an attentive audience on the liberal and enlightened principles of the Right Honourable Viscount, who was proclaimed by them, and admitted by their listeners, to be an honour to England, and anticipated as a blessing to Ireland.

Nor were the female part of the population indifferent spectators of the preparations for the approaching struggle, which engrossed their husbands, fathers, lovers, brothers, or

friends; there they were, elbowing, scolding, and all but shooting whoever presumed to gainsay their fiat, that Lord Warringdon, and none but he, should be returned for their town.

The ladies being among his most zealous advocates, — first, because he was *not* an Orangeman; and, secondly, because he was young and handsome:—the old ones might be seen hurrying to chapel to pray for him, while the young ones, sauntering up and down the square, listening to the band, or standing looking out at window, flirted for him; exhorting those already his friends, confirming the vacillating, and endeavouring, by smiles, or poutings, to cajole, or frighten, his declared enemies,—kneeling to some, almost embracing others; and how could they do less for so handsome, so gallant a candidate, who had given a ball at the assembly-rooms, and had danced with "every girl of consequence" in the room? Besides, he had such beautiful dark eyes, and he made such an elegant bow, and another besides, which they did not, however, add, but which we will do for them,— "Besides, he had all the dashing young men of the county on his side!"

Nor were the females of lower degree less energetic in his behalf, groups of them were gathered round the shop doors, or hall doors, insisting to one another, and all of the worthier gender (*soi disant*,) they could get to listen to them, "that it would be a murther outright, a mortal sin, troth it would, to disappoint such a darlin', purty, free-spoken, free-givin' gintleman, the frind and son-in-law to be of misther Wilmot, the Lord prosper and purtect him!"

We say that all this "*might* be seen," but we do not take upon ourselves to assert that Lady Anne observed all, or, indeed, any of the bustling, good-humoured, lively scenes passing around her, so completely was her interest in Warringdon's election lost in her fears for Barham's life.

She was roused from her somewhat unpleasant reflections, by loud and vehement shouts of welcome, from the mob of the town, and "loyal" and affectionate greetings from the Castle Wilmot tenantry, when they recognized the carriage, as Bartly Kilfoy tried to steer it through the dense mass of human beings, which encumbered its progress without overturning it or crushing them.

"High for her ladyship! high for the masther! hurrah for the English lord! Warringdon for ever! Wilmot for ever! success to them, and the divil's curse to their inemies!" and various other equally "neat and appropriate" expressions of zeal and attachment, were poured forth in chorus from hundreds of rough throats.

"Whisht, boys, whisht! and God bless ye!" cried Bartly Kilfoy, "or y'ell frighten the horses!"

"Frightin 'em! is it the Castle Wilmot horses to be frightined at the boys hurrahing for their master? faith, they have a good right to be used to it, by this time, any how."

But the Castle Wilmot horses, like some ladies, were capricious animals, and chose, despite of the good reason just adduced, to be nervous and agitated, so they began to plunge, and lash, Bartly Kilfoy to coax and curse by turns, and Lady Anne to scream.

"Never fear, my lady, never fear!" cried the wild crowd, around her. "Take them stupid bastes off, Bartly, and we'll dhraw her ladyship ourselves."

And now a violent contest ensued between

"her own boys," as they called themselves, and "the boys of the town," for the honour of drawing her. And while they roared, and cursed, and shouldered one another, the unfortunate victim of their gallant contention was knocked from side to side of the disputed vehicle, till she lay exhausted, scarcely able even to shriek out to them, to "keep the peace."

"Oh we will, me lady, and why not? sure arn't we paceable? quite paceable—get out o' that ye vagabones, and don't be frightening her ladyship! what call have ye to her at all? we are her own boys—glory be to God, and knows how she ought to be thrated."

"An' isn't she in our town? 'tis we that has the best right to her—so be off this moment, or we'll make ye—be off, ye sheep-stalers?" vociferated the boys of the town.

"Ye bred and born murdhering villains, how dare ye call us that?" roared the insulted Castle Wilmots—and up flew hundreds of shillelaghs, and off flew hundreds of hats, as the said shillelaghs descended accompanied by yells and execrations, such as none but Irishmen can utter, and which poor Lady Anne listened to in an agony of terror.

Just at that moment, Mr. O'Reilly appeared; flung himself in the midst of the crowd, and down went the sticks at once.

"'Tis our own town, you know, father O'Reilly!" one party submissively represented.

"We are her own boys:" expostulated the others.

"I am ashamed of ye all, town and country;" answered the young priest, "gather up your sticks and hats, you quarrelsome, good for nothing fellows, and begone! a pretty way, indeed, of shewing your respect for a lady, to frighten her out of her senses—I am ashamed of ye!"

"My dear O'Reilly," said Lady Anne, "I have been in search of you for the last hour, to hear something about unfortunate Barham, he is mortally wounded, I understand."

"Oh no! no such thing—'tis a mere flesh wound, and he will be as well as ever, in a day or two."

"Thank God!" piously ejaculated Lady Anne.

"But," he continued, "poor Molony's arm is broken."

"Oh, only that! I heard that he was killed;" Lady Anne replied with indifference. "But, tell me, was the quarrel about a lady?"

O'Reilly laughed—"make your mind easy, on that head! no—the dispute was about a bull, not a lady. By the way, Barham, with all his folly and foolishness, is a fine fellow: you will not have to find the courage, as well as sense, of the *menage*, and that is some comfort. I am glad, more glad than I can tell, that at least, in that respect, he is not unworthy of Maria Wilmot; not utterly contemptible; still it is a terrible sacrifice!"

"Nonsense, my dear O'Reilly — sixteen thousand a year may reconcile any woman to a fool—and I am very sorry I cannot add another epithet—for the more courage he has, the more difficult it will be to manage him——I shall never be able to frighten him, I fear."

O'Reilly shrugged his shoulders, sighed, and jumped into the carriage, and they proceeded to the court-house.

To their astonishment, the first person they saw on reaching the hustings, was Barham, pushing a way for himself, and his late

antagonist, who was shouting with pain and enthusiasm.

"For heaven's sake, Molony, how could you be mad enough to come here with a broken arm?" asked O'Reilly, who had run after the duellists of the morning, and bosom-friends of mid-day.

"What matter about it? I wanted to see the sport, I was going mad there at Costelloe's listening to the hurrahing, and I, in bed, having nothing to do with it. I begged the doctor, and people for God sake to let me come, but they wouldn't—so I waited awhile, and presently they all set off here, and left me—and then I got up softly and went to Barham's room, to ask him to help me on with my clothes, and there I found him dressing too, so we agreed to come away together—we nicked them, didn't we Barham?"

"I think," observed O'Reilly smiling, "that you will find yourself 'nicked' into a fever-a-piece for this exploit."

"Capital fun!" exclaimed Barham, "do you know, Malony, I was just thinking how droll it is that you and I should be here such good friends, arm in arm, after what happened this morning?"

"Oh, not at all, my dear fellow—you are

often ten times better friends than ever with a man after fighting him ; that is to say, if you don't happen to kill him, you know—it brings you acquainted with a man at once—you see directly what he is made of—now for instance, only for that little misunderstanding between us, I might never have liked you, or respected you as I do at present ; for now I see you are a stout fellow, as well as a right good-natured one, and a devilish good shot, into the bargain, and I assure you I am uncommonly glad I did not kill you this morning."

"Thank you, I am very much obliged to you, Molony, for all your good-nature—and believe me, the regard is mutual ;" answered Barham, grasping the hand of his companion.—

"Listen, listen," cried O'Reilly, "Warringdon is going to speak."

We will not, however, trouble our readers with a detail of his lordship's harangue : we think it sufficient to state that it contained the usual common-places, about himself and his constituency, profession of devotion to their interests, praise of himself, and abuse of his opponent, to be found in all public dis-

plays of the same nature, throughout the united Empire, with the addition, in this case, of much vehement and energetic declamation in favour of civil and religious liberty, and assurances of his ardent zeal in the "great cause."

His oration was received with loud acclamation, and cries of "Warringdon for ever! The true friend of Ireland and the county! no double daling in him! but comes to the point at once, and spakes his mind plainly."

Mr. Archer then came forward, and was received with groans, and hisses, not a few, cries of "Down with the orangeman! down with the black protestant! that wants to keep all the loaves and fishes to himself! and down with the thraitors and tyrants that support him! to the divil wid them all!"

The shew of hands was declared, by the High Sheriff, to be in favour of Viscount Warringdon. But Mr. Archer's friends demanded a poll; and accordingly, a man was polled on each side, and the court-house was soon after cleared of its noisy occupants, both parties talking big of their hopes of the morrow, when the "battle" was to begin in earnest.

CHAPTER X.

THE eventful morning came, and the whole town was alive at the dawn of day; crowds of partizans of all ages and ranks gathering round the committee-rooms, of the opposing canditates; electioneering agents, oratorizing, explaining, or mystifying, as suited their purpose; looking over certificates, and "making Pat Conny sinsible he was only to be Pat Conny the first time he voted, but Dennis Sleevan, the second time, in regard of poor Dennis not being convanient just then, because he was berried last week; and reminding Martin Donovan, he musn't forget to slip a flea inside his lase, that he might swear

with a safe conscience, that the life in it was still in existence," and other trifling, though necessary, arrangements, for the proper carrying on of their employer's interests; and voters were eating, drinking, shouting, laughing, and whirling their ferrals to give them "the raal fighting touch," and among the noisiest of the noisy, as in duty bound, were the Castle Wilmot boys, who strove hard, by all the means in their power, to keep up the honour of "the family," and make as much riot as possible.

"Which of you has seen or heard any thing of Mc Alpine?" demanded Mr. Malony, as he entered Lord Warringdon's committee-room, his face flushed from pain and impatience.

"Still at Mount Pleasant, I suppose," replied one of the group he addressed.

"Still at Mount Pleasant! confound him! what is he doing there?"

"Making love to Lady Mary Pemberton, I hear."

"Making love to the devil, man!—why isn't he here? who ever heard of a man leaving his freeholders to themselves in this way? how can he tell who they vote for when he's

not on the spot? Making love indeed! the bletherem skite of a fellow! always bothering some woman or other with his cursed poetry, or romance, and she wishing him at the devil all the while, for his pains. I bring up my men myself, my Lord; I take care that nobody dare meddle with a freeholder of mine, or I'd put a bullet through his head, and distrain every beast belonging to the tenant who dared even to think of voting according to his own vagaries. Making love, indeed—the numbskull!"

Mr. Malony's invective against the romantic Mr. Mc Alpine was cut short by Father John Molloy's entrance, looking as if he were the bearer of portentous information. Lord Warringdon advanced, and shook hands most cordially with "his kind and excellent friend, Mr. Molloy."

"My lord, I am credibly informed that there's a batch of Mc Alpines in town, along with Archer's men!" and the worthy priest accompanied this startling intelligence with an ominous shake of the head.

"Pooh! pooh! Father John: 'tis impossible," Malony interrupted. "Is it the Mc Alpine servants who are at rack-rents, and

dare not call their souls their own? Do you think they would have the courage to vote against his orders? not they."

"But, Mr. Malony, what do you say, if 'tis by his orders they are voting?"

"Do you suppose he wants to have cold lead lodged in his brains?" quietly demanded, in his turn, Mr. Malony.

"But, my dear sir, have you ascertained that Mr. Mc Alpine *has* sent down his men for Mr. Archer?" queried the Viscount.

"Why, my Lord, I have it on good authority that he has. A sister of Pat Sullivan's wife (Mr. Mc Alpine's foster-brother, you know, Mr. Malony) told Mrs. Mc Donogh's daughter's husband, a first cousin of her own, and nurse to Mr. Wilmot, that Mr. Mc Alpine's agent, Misther Fahy, had sent back orders to Pat Sullivan, for all the men, them that lived by the say-side, and them that did not, - to come down by watther, unknownst, for fear would any of the Castle Wilmots murdher 'em, if they come by the road; but to take care for his life would Pat Sullivan let on, 'twas his masther that bid him."

Here "Rascal, scoundrel, blackguard, liar,

coward, and other synonymous and equally euphonious epithets arose from all parts of the room, coupled with the name of Peter Mc Alpine of Mc Alpine castle.

"The only way in the world is to send him a message at once," observed Mr. Malony. "Here, my Lord, sit down, I'll get you a pen and ink in a minute;—now for it!" he cried, clapping the table with the only hand he had at liberty.

"Now for it!" echoed all the bye-standers.

"The cannibals!" muttered the Viscount. "But," he added, aloud, "before I send Mr. Mc Alpine a message, I think we should have better authority than that of foster-brothers and nurses. How can we tell whether one word of this story be true? My respected friend here, Mr. Molloy, does not give it on his own authority, or it would, of course, be conclusive."

"Oh, well,—may be so," Mr. Malony reluctantly acquiesced. "However," he added, "you may as well write the letter, my Lord, to have it ready to send when we want it, for I dare say, before the election is over, he will be playing us a trick, and then we have our

challenge written, and nothing to do but to dash it off; and even if we shouldn't want it for him, we shall for somebody else; with a few alterations, you know, the same copy will serve for a dozen different people."

Lord Warringdon did not much relish the idea of an assortment of ready-made challenges, but, however, he was too prudent to object to the proposal; and, in a very few minutes, a letter full of flogging, posting, and shooting, dictated by Mr. Malony, and penned by his lordship, was read aloud, to the great delight and admiration of the company at large.

"Do you know, I am in great hopes that you will have to fight Mc Alpine: it would make you so popular with the mob! for the fighting candidate has always the best chance, you know, of being the sitting member. I assure you, Mr. Wilmot would not have kept the county so long, but for his handiness with the pistols. He fought four men one morning before breakfast, and wounded them all,—don't you remember, O'Leary?" Mr. Malony added, turning to the electioneering agent, *en chef*.

"Aye, faith, Mr. Malony, but he was left for dead himself, you recollect."

"I know he was; but what does that signify? he gained his return by it, and never would else; for the opposite party, by bribing, and tricking, and telling lies, of one kind or other, had contrived to get eight hundred a-head of us, and we had but three days left to pull up. Well, my Lord, the mob got outrageous when they heard Mr. Wilmot was badly wounded, and they threatened to burn the town, if he died without being elected. In all your life you never saw such a row; the women running about screeching, and clapping their hands, and swearing they'd have the lives of them that took his; the men shouting, and cursing like mad. I had my skull fractured by the way, but only in a mistake, you know, the poor fellows took me for somebody else."

"Pleasant mistake!" thought his lordship.

"Well, Mr. Malony, and how did it all end?"

"Oh, as well as possible, my lord: the army was called out, but the Colonel was a friend of ours, and behaved very handsomely,

so we beat the other party fairly out of the town, and Mr. Wilmot was elected that very day."

"Mr. Malony, I beg pardon for interrupting you," said Father John; "hadn't we better see after them Mc Alpines; they'll slip through our fingers else. I was thinking of going myself into the —— booth, to watch them as they come in, and know the truth at once."

This idea met universal approbation, and accordingly, Father John hurried to the —— booth, the strong hold of the Mc Alpine interest.

A batch of the suspected freeholders had arrived before him, and a ragged, half-starved, miserable-looking creature, was now undergoing the usual interrogatives by the deputy-assessors.

"Who do I wote for, is it? I wote for —— for,—— by my conscience, then, I can't remember the name just at this present minute. Misther Fahy, Misther Fahy! which of 'em is it you tould me to wote for?" demanded the puzzled freeholder, in a stage-whisper.

"Archer. Hav'nt I been able to bate that into your head yet, ye omadhoun?" enquired, in his turn, Mr. Mc Alpine's confidential man of business.

"Omadhoun! Misther Fahy?" repeated the voter: "faith, an' the 'cutest boy in the county, 'ud be bothered when he's never tould two days runnin' the same thing:—one time I'm to vote for the English Lord; then I am'nt, but it's for Misther Archer I'm to wote, how are we to know what's wanting of us at all?"

This dialogue excited shouts of jeering laughter from the Warringdon party, and cries of "Success to ye! your scholar does you credit, Misther Fahy! he's a nate boy at his A, B, C."

"Silence!" cried the deputy assessor. "Your vote, my honest man."

"Archer! why don't you spake out at onst, ye ohnshuch?" whispered Mr. Fahy, angrily, in the ear of his very stupid, and now somewhat sulky, pupil.

"Oh, it's for the English lord he's goin' to vote," loudly and scoffingly laughed the Warringdons.

"By the powers! then, it isn't. I'll wote for neither of 'em;—but for my own masther, Mr. Mc Alpine, and nobody else," replied the persecuted and displeased freeholder.

"Mr. Mc Alpine is not a candidate, my honest man," replied the deputy assessor.

"Well, for Miss Kitty, then!"

This answer was received with shouts of laughter by the Warringdons, and with muttered curses by the Archers.

"Ladies are never elected to serve in parliament, my honest man. You must, therefore, take your choice of the three candidates in question, Viscount Warringdon, Mr. Fitzgerald, and Mr. Archer; and make up your mind at once, if you please, for you are stopping the poll all this time."

"Faith! an' with the blessing of God, I won't stop it any longer," and the indignant voter turned suddenly round and took to his heels.

He was succeeded by another of the batch, who got through his lesson more creditably to himself, and Mr. Fahy.

"My blessing to ye, Phanick O'Dea!" said Father John, "how long is it sence you turned Protestant?"

"Me turn Protestan', is it, Father John! The Lord save us!" And Phanick crossed himself reverentially. "Sure I'm no Protestan', nor one belongin' to me; the heavens betwixt us an' harum!"

"If you arn't a protestant, and a bitther black one, too, how do ye come to vote for the Orange candidate, my man?"

"Avoch, Father John, sure it isn't of our own will we're voting! didn't Pat Sullivan threaten to burn the houses over our heads, and banish us the place, if we didn't wote the way we were ordhered? An' how would we stand the counthry, Father John, if we didn't? always in arrares of rint, you know."

"But, Phanick, didn't your masther promise the English Lord; how can he go back of that, now?"

Phanick twisted his hat between his fingers, shifted from one leg to the other, and was silent a moment.

"It isn't for the likes of us, you know, your Reverence, to be faulting him, whatever he'd do: sure he'd sweep us off the face of the earth if we didn't do his biddin!"

"But do ye know it is his biddin', Phanick?"

"Sure if it wasn't, would Pat Sullivan be goin' on the way he was, sthrivin' to get us down, and threatnin' our lives, if ye wouldn't be said by him?"

"Michelleen! Mavourneen! are ye there?" Father John cried, turning towards the crowd of Castle Wilmot freeholders and idlers, who crowded the booth.

The same little bare-legged, red-headed boy, already introduced to our readers, obeyed the summons, and, after having performed his customary *salam* of pulling forward his hair, and scraping his foot, awaited deferentially the priest's commands.

"Michelleen, be off this minute, as fast as ye can set fut to the ground, to Lord Warringdon's committee-room, and——"

And Michelleen was gallopping off, when recalled by Father John.

"Come back, ye little omadhoun! is it goin' ye are without knowin' what it is ye are goin' for?" He continued,—"go to the committee-room, and tell Mr. Malony I want to spake to him immadiately;—now away with ye, my man!"

In a few minutes Michelleen re-appeared, ushering in Mr. Maloney.

"Well, Father John, what is it?"

"Which of us was right about Mc Alpine? here are his men votin' for Archer, and by his orders, as I have found out by one of 'themselves.'"

"Ha! I wouldn't doubt him, the slippery rascal!" exclaimed Mr. Malony. "Where in the world did I leave the challenge?" he continued, searching his pockets. "Oh, I forgot, it is in the committee-room. Michelleen! run and tell Mr. O'Leary to get an express ready directly for Mount Pleasant, and to send him after me to Lord Warringdon's committee-room. The only way to deal with such a fellow as Mc Alpine is to frighten him, Father John; or, if he is not to be frightened, shoot him like a dog."

CHAPTER XI.

The answer to the hostile message arrived in due course, and was as follows:—

My Lord,

You appear to me to have made an extraordinary mistake, for I am under no promise to support you, nor ever was; you must remember I always declined engaging myself. It is true that I have declared my intention of voting for you, but I never bound myself by a distinct promise. A declaration is one thing,—a promise another. Such being the state of the case between us, I have promised to support Mr. Archer, and cannot see how, in so doing, I deserve the imputation

contained in your lordship's favour, received this day, of "dishonourable conduct." However, as you have been led, as you say, to depend upon my support, I will manage thus:—I give my personal vote (as I have promised) to Mr. Archer, and my people I leave to themselves.

I have the honour to remain, &c."

"It is all right, you see," observed the young Viscount, not sorry to be rid of a pistolling match, to his friends assembled in full divan.

"All right, my Lord! all right? any thing but that;—all wrong, you mean!" exclaimed Mr. Malony.

"Why, does he not leave his men to themselves? and is not that just what we wanted?" asked the candidate.

"Oh, the schemer! doesn't he know well they dare not go against his orders, already given? And the poltroon won't fight! you see how he backs out of that! I don't know what we are to do with him, at all," said Mr. Malony, rather despondingly.

"Never mind now, don't be one bit unasy," interposed Father John; "but give me the

letter, and I'll go among the tenants. Lave Mc Alpine with me Mr. Malony, and I'll settle him, I promise you."

And now what had been only noise and confusion, became wild tumult, and deafening roar. The freed freeholders of the Mc Alpine estate, found their newly accorded liberty of thinking, and acting for themselves a perillous as well as puzzling privilege; beset on one side by Father John's eloquence, and the Warringdon shillelagh; and on the other, by Mr. Archer's money, and fear of their master.

"Do you want to deny your religion, ye unfortunate misguided cratures?" Father John cried, "oh that ever I should live to see a man of my flock voting for an orange candidate and protestant ascendancy; and the downfall of their own ancient thrue and holy religion! and when I'll be witness agin ye at the last day, that I warned ye, but that ye wouldn't give heed to me, how will it be with ye then, boys?"

"Avoch, Father John, bad enough! sure we'd be said by you afore the world, and why not only for the masther, but Father John?

Oh! if we displase him, how will it be with us at all, and our long wake little families?"

"But don't ye see his writing, boys?—what more would ye have! sure he laves you to plaze yourselves,—doesn't he, my men?"

His auditors however, still hesitated.

"If he shouldn't mane what he says, Father John?"

"Och, is it making a liar of your masther ye are?" queried the orator with a half laugh.

"God help us!" they groaned; "well, Father John, we'll do your bidden, and vote for the English Lord."

"Do at your peril!" would say Mr. Fahy. "do, and I'll dhrive every mother son of ye, not a baste ye have, that shan't be in the pound twenty-four hours after you give that vote."

"Ohra, murdher! what's to become of us at all!" cried the poor trembling wretches.

And then an electioneering agent for Archer would whisper, "A couple of pounds a head boys, an' the best of ating an' drinking, what do ye say to that?"

"Which way do ye wote, ye vellians of

the world?" the Jim Naughten's boys, and the Castle Wilmot's would roar, whirling their "ferrals."

"For ye, for ye!" cried they, more influenced by the dread of hell-fire in prospect, and of a sound drubbing at the moment, than by love of money, or even fear of being made houseless.

"Success to ye! glory to ye! hurrah for the thrue and staunch friends of their religion; high for the Mc Alpines!" the Warringdon's shouted.

"Ye impident blackguards! ye shall pay for this,—take my word for it, every identical man o' ye!" the infuriated agent vociferated. And, perceiving some signs of vacillation of purpose in the crowd, he added:

"If there are any among ye, will stand by their masther and their cabins, and the bastes, and their children, let 'em come over to my side!"

A few answered the appeal.

"Ah the renegades! the apostates! the vellains;" the Castle Wilmots howled, as they rushed on the small and terrified band.

The yells and shrieks became so appalling,

and there occurred so many bleeding heads and fractured fingers, that the military were called out, to restore order; and indeed, after shooting two or three, and wounding twice as many more, the military partially succeeded in this object.

But the Mc Alpines took advantage of the general confusion, "to slip away unknown," and return quietly to their own homes, leaving the Archers and Warringdons, to dispute as to whom they by right belonged: and great was the astonishment and indignation of both parties, when they discovered the absence of the objects of their contention.

The Warringdons did not, however, take any step to bring back the fugitives, inasmuch as their previous anxiety to gain them had been prompted rather by a desire to detach them from Archer (who had no chance of succeding but through the Mc Alpine interest) than by any want of an accession of voters.

But the Archers were determined not to resign, without a struggle, their only hope; so a deputation of gentlemen of that party, immediately set off in pursuit of the flying freeholders, escorted by a detachment of mili-

tary to protect them through "the enemy's country."

They overtook the run-a-ways not far from a village on the Castle Wilmot estate: and first they tried persuasion, then threats; and were proceeding to blows, when the Mc Alpines ran for refuge into the village, and the Archer gentlemen knowing that its male inhabitants were absent at the election, fearlessly pursued them to their retreat, and had already managed to secure a dozen of the less fleet-footed of the poor fellows, when, to their surprise, yells and execrations rose on all sides, and presently there issued from each house, a shrieking, cursing fury, with her dark hair hanging about her shoulders, and her apron full of stones.

"Bad luck to ye, souls an' bodies! how dare ye come next or nigh us! d'ye think becase our min is'nt in it, that ye'll not find them that are able for ye? be off this minute, or by the powers, we'll make ye! be off! and don't dare lay your hand on them dacent, quiet, boys, or we won't lave a skreed o' ye together!" so screamed these fair defenders of the Castle Wilmot territory, and of its right

to procure those who claimed sanctuary in it.

The gentlemen, in defiance of these threats, continued to advance, and the amazons immediately saluted them with a volley of stones, and one of the party was knocked off his horse. The women huzzaed, and the gentlemen swore.

"Read the Riot Act!" commanded one of the Archers who was a magistrate.

"To the divil with yourselves, and your Riot Act! ye mane-spirited palthroons! ye orange villians!" cried the ladies, and they continued to scream, curse, and fling stones.

"Fire sir, on that mob of rioters!" said the magistrate above mentioned, to the officer commanding the detachment.

"Not where the only rioters are women, sir," replied the young military man.

"Fire on the men then!"—said the magistrate.

"The men are perfectly quiet, standing with their arms folded looking on, I could not possibly fire under such circumstances. My duty only is to protect you!"

"Then why do you not protect us?" demanded the Archer gentlemen.

"I should if the assailants were men," replied the young officer. "But what can I do with a mob of women?"

"Hurrah for the red-coats!" shouted the fair rioters, who had stood quiet and silent, while doubtful as to the result of the colloquy between the civil and military authorities; "long life to 'em! 'tis them that knows how to trate the women! not like them cadgers from the town beyant;—them mudhering villians of process sarvers, that's thinkin' to get inside of the masther's son-in-law, the schamers of the world!—"

"It's a long march ye tuk, sir," said the speaker-woman and ringleader of the party, turning to the officer. "May be you would like a dhrop of whiskey and a fresh egg, or some throut out of the river, or a roasted pratee?—if we had betther, we'd give it, but whatever it is, you have the 'cead mille faltha!' with it, any how; and something for your men too, the craturs."

The officer thankfully assented to the proposal, and there was a temporary cessation of hostilities.

"Make 'em give us back our min, sir,"

said the amazon coaxingly;—"do, and the Lord prosper ye! we won't pelt 'em any more, an' we'll give 'em something to ate into the bargin, for they're starving wid the hunger, God help 'em! will ye, *agra*, give us back them poor craturs?"

The good humoured young man laughed, and promised his mediation; but the gentlemen scornfully rejected the terms, and had therefore to return faint from want of food, and harassed by the women who hung on their rear, pelting and cursing to the very outskirts of the town, which they regained half nearly dead, from fatigue, hunger, and bruises. Here they conducted the freeholders to an eating-house, where they were ordered "lashings of mate and whiskey," in exchange for their liberty.

"This is eligant fine ating, to be sure Thady," observed one of them,—"but how will it be with us whin we go back? The Castle Wilmots will murdher us!"

"Faith, they will so," said Jim Naughten, who happened just then to walk in, ostensibly to make love to a daughter of the woman of the house, who was a cousin of his own, but truth obliges us to state our belief that his

visit was rather diplomatic than gallant; be that as it may, it is more his cousin's affair than ours.

"Faith, you may be sure," continued this Job's comforter, "of as fine a bating as ever ye got in your lives;—I wish I was as sure of a fine estate. Ye must have grate courage, boys, to think of standin' the counthry at all, after doing what ye're goin' to do. Not a fair, nor patthern, ye won't get murdhered at,—an' if you want a hundherd of malt, or a stone of salt, or if your wife has a lock of wool, or a thrifle of flax to sell, troth ye must do without it, or be comin' down every hand's turn by wather, for fear of the Castle Wilmot boys."

"We know that, as well as ye can tell us, Jim," groaned his auditors. "But if we wote agin the masther's ordhers, sorrow a thing we'll have to buy or sell at all; didn't we run out of the town to get quit of 'em all, an' didn't the Archers bring the army a top of us, weren't we made prisoners?"

"Why did ye let 'em?"

"Why did ye let 'em, is it? asy said, Jim, but troth, if ye were in it yoursel' you w'd fine it far harder to help, than you think for, I

don't care a ha'porth about a sthroke of a stick, becase I'm used to it ever since I was small, but the baynet, Jim, is a quare thing, I wouldn't like a prod of it at-all-at-all."

"Pooh, what harum would it do you?" asked Jim, "see how the Castle Wilmot women were not afear'd of it."

"Why would they? whatever they done, they knew well, the sogers wouldn't touch em."

"Well, no matther for that now," Jim interrupted, "what do ye intend to do, boys?"

"What do we intend doin', is it? we intend doin' whatever we can't help doin' Jim!"

"Lads, will ye wote for Archer?"

"What else can we do, when the masther bids us, you know? troth if we don't, he'll sell our skins, let alone our bastes!"

"He won't be long over ye, any how," replied Jim.

"How's that?" demanded his auditors, eagerly.

"Don't ye know that Letterbrough is a lase of the Castle Wilmot lands, that Mr. Mc Alpine's father held for three lives; two of 'em are up, an' the last one is an ould woman

that's dying every year of the rheumatics; so ye never can tell the minute ye'll come back to your raal masther; he's the one you ought to mind;—the one that owns the land is'nt it boys?—the man that, whether tinant or no, if ye were brought up before the grand jury, for being too fond of mutton, or too ready with the stick, would stand your friend, whin your own masther, as ye call him, w'd be sittin' fair an' asy by his parlor fire, writin' love letthers, or readin' out of a book; an' a negur he is into the bargain, that begrudges a dacent boy that w'd be goin' the road, his bit an' sup, an' a mouthful of hay for his bastes!"

"A thin would he, Tim?" interrogated the much-shocked Letterbroughs.

"A thin would he?" repeated Jim, deridingly;"—Don't ye know he would?—didn't he do it by mysel', an' bad manners to him! but no matther about that now, I wasn't thrustin' to him, thank God, for mate or dhrink; I had my own masther to go to, the Lord be praised; the man that has a sate by his fire, for who's would come in, and lashings of the best of ating an' dhrinking, an' a *cead mille faltha,* an' a tap on the shouldher into

the bargain; an' all this you have good rason to know, boys, for many's the time we sat together in his chimbly corner, an' himsel' in the kitchen talkin' to us as free as if we were gintlemin."

"We know that too, Jim," interrupted the freeholders; sure there is'nt his aqual in the country round, for the kind heart an' the open hand; an' if t'was himsel' that was standin' Jim, d'ye think we'd refuse him our sowls, let alone our wotes? no, troth, we'd pitch Mc Alpine to the devil for him, an' why not, but,"—

"That's right, boys," said Jim, not allowing the speaker to finish his sentence,—"I'm sure you would, but you know his son-in-law is himsel' in a manner; behave the way ye ought now, an' I promise you, that you won't lose by it;—supposin' itsel' that Mc Alpine banishes you off the lands, has'nt the masther room an' to spare for ye, an' half the country besides?"

"But what will we do? the Archers have a hould of us now, Jim," replied Jim's auditors, hesitatingly.

"Well, stay with them, sure," but, he added laughing, "vote for us."

"Oh yea! how will that be at all?" queried the astonished Mc Alpines.

"I'll make ye sinsible of it to-morrow, boys,"—replied the orator;—I'll be with ye airly by the first light, an' now God be wid ye!"—and so saying, Jim walked off, shouting his favourite tune of "tattered Jack Welsh," his only regret being, that Winny was not present to be "grigged" by it.

CHAPTER XII

THE following morning the Letterbrough freeholders were conveyed through the town in carriages escorted by gentlemen mounted and armed, the mob roaring "Warringdon for ever! high for the English lord! Warringdon and emancipation! Down with the Archers! the Orangemen! down with Mc Alpine, the thraitor! down with 'em all! to the divel with the whole of em!" accompanying this kind consignment of Mr. Archer and his friends by throwing hands full of mud, dead cats, and, occasionally, a stone or two, at the carriage; venturing, however, rather

cautiously on the last mark of disapprobation, being deterred by the pistols which peeped from the bosoms of the Archers.

At length the cavalcade reached their destination, and the freeholders were ushered into the —— booth. They were received with loud plaudits by the Archer party, and cries of "Fine fellows! true to their landlord!" and by groans and hisses, curses and ferocious scowls, and muttered threats, by the Warringdons.

"Don't suffer yourselves to be intimidated, my honest men," said Mr. Archer's agent. "The Warringdon party may threaten, but they dare not injure you. Mr. Wilmot is a mighty great man, no doubt," he continued sneeringly, "and his tenants are fine bludgeoneerers, but never you mind; the king happens to be a greater man than Mr. Wilmot; and as for his tenants, the first among them that lifts a stick against ye shall be lodged in the county jail."

"Aye, aye!" shouted the Castle Wilmots, in derision, "when you've caught us! once we are on our own mountains, d'ye think we'll be aisily had? Oh ye! what a chance you have of us! an' so ye think we'll wait for your

lave to rise our sticks;—ye're comical fellows, troth!"

"Silence, silence!" the deputy assessor called out. "Come, my lads, your votes, whatever they are; give them at once, and don't be afraid."

"We won't, sir," replied a little crabbed, half-starved looking man, advancing from the group.

"What is your name?" asked the deputy assessor.

"Thady Sullivan."

"Are you twenty-one years of age?"

"Twenty-one years of age, is it?" repeated Thady. "Faith, I wish I was thrustin' to that same! I am so, and a good many years to the back of it, more's the pity."

"Are you a freeholder of the county?"

"Sure if I wasn't, I wouldn't be here!" answered Thady.

"Have you the clear yearly sum of forty shillings, over and above your rent?"

"Is it that jail-bird?" interrupted the Warringdon agent. "Put him the freeholders' oath!"

The freeholder's oath was administered, and

after that, as demanded by the Warringdon party, the bribery oath also, and now, having no more plausible objections to make, they suffered the man to proceed.

"Whom do you vote for?" asked the deputy-assessor.

"I vote for Lord Wardherdown," said Thady.

"Warringdon?" repeated the deputy assessor, surprised.

"Warringdon!" echoed the Archer party with rage and astonishment. "Infamous cheating!—shameful! shameful to put between landlord and tenant! setting the county in a blaze! rebels! traitors!"

"Hurrah! hurrah!" the Warringdons shouted. "Thady Sullivan for ever!—chair him! chair him!"

And accordingly they carried Thady on their shoulders round the room.

His example was followed by his companions; and as they were walking off, accompanied by the laughter and acclamations of one party, and execration of the other, Thady turned towards the Archers, and making a low bow, "Thank ye, gentlemen, for the mate

an' the dhrink, an' the fine jaunt in your grand carriages, and for all the honour ye ped us—ye see, we tak your advice, and wern't afeard to spake out."

"Let me pass; let me pass, boys;" said O'Reilly, impatiently pushing through the shouting crowd. "Where's Mr. Malony?"

"Here!" cried the object enquired for, advancing, and still laughing at the trick just played by Thady and his compeers. "But what is the matter, O'Reilly? you look bothered—is anything going wrong?

"Yes; Lord Templemore is polling for Archer in the barony of—"

Malony's broad, good-humoured face darkened.

"That's one way of standing neuter, and be d—d to him! Hollo! one of ye there, Castle Wilmots! give me my hat!" he vociferated. "I'll just step to the committee-room, and see what's best to be done."

All agreed that the thing best to be done was that a deputation of their party, headed by Mr. Malony, should wait without loss of time on the noble lord at his residence, a few minutes' walk from the Warringdon committee-room.

As these broad-shouldered, formidable supporters of Lord Warringdon defiled one after another, Mr. Malony, bringing up the rear, into Lord Templemore's library, he was observed to change colour. He received them very courteously, however, and expressed much regret at seeing Mr. Malony's arm in a sling.

"I am much obliged to your Lordship," replied Mr. Malony; "luckily 'tis only my left arm; I have my right one still, for a case of need, whenever it comes:"—and Mr. Malony squared his shoulders—and Lord Templemore hemmed.

"My Lord," continued Mr. Malony, who had been selected as spokesman of the party, "we have come here this morning on very particular business; to remind you, in fact, on the part of Lord Warringdon, of a circumstance you seem to have forgotton,—namely—your promise of standing neuter between him and Mr. Archer—giving plumpers to Mr. Fitzgerald. Have you kept that promise, my Lord?"

"I am not in the habit of breaking my promises, Mr. Malony," replied Lord Templemore, with much dignity.

"I don't know what your habits may be, my Lord; but there must be a beginning to every habit, you know, and *that* beginning, it appears to me, you are making on the present occasion."

"How do you prove that, Mr. Malony?" the Earl asked.

"Why, my Lord, you are this very minute giving your second voices to Archer, in the barony of ——"

"I beg your pardon, I have not given my vote at all."

"You mean your personal vote, my Lord?" asked Mr. Malony.

His Lordship bowed assent.

"Oh, my Lord, that would be a very good answer in a court of law; but it won't do in a court of honour," said Mr. Malony, smiling somewhat contemptuously. "Your tenants are not standing neuter, and therefore your personal neutrality goes for nothing."

"I am not responsible for my tenants, Sir," replied Lord Templemore.

"I am afraid your Lordship will find some difficulty in persuading Lord Warringdon and his friends that you are not," answered Ma-

lony, accompanying the observation by a look to which the Earl hastened to reply.

"My dear Sir, allow me to explain to you my position with respect to my tenantry in the barony you allude to. They all hold under leases; pay their rent to a day; are never in arrears; in a word, are comfortable, and therefore independent. Well, my property in that neighbourhood borders that of Mr. Archer, and my people say that they will not incur the enmity of the tenantry of an estate close to them, for a stranger like Lord Warringdon, to whom they have no local attachment. In fact, my dear Sir, they have broke loose, the rascals! but they know they are not in my power, and I cannot control them, or—"

"That may be all very true, my Lord," interrupted Mr. Malony, "but all your tenantry are not next neighbours of Mr. Archer's. Give us an equivalent to those that have polled for him in some other barony."

"Most willingly," his Lordship assented eagerly; "or I will consent even to double the number; will that satisfy you, as to my impartiality?"

"Would your Lordship have any objection

to state this arrangement in writing?" asked a cautious member of thė deputation.

"My word, Sir,"—and the Earl was proceeding in a dignified strain, when interrupted by Mr. Malony.

"Certainly—there's no necessity for any stronger guarantee, my Lord."

Lord Templemore acknowledged the compliment by a bow and smile.

"For," continued Mr. Malony, with a meaning look, *I* hold the promise."

He shook hands with the Earl, and departed with his train.

CHAPTER XIII.

A FEW mornings after the conversation just detailed, Mr. Malony, Mr. O'Reilly, Mr. O'Leary, and half a dozen other friends and partizans, rushed into Lady Anne's drawing-room, shouting out, "Good news—good news! the contest we may say is over: the barony of ——, where Archer's chief force lies, will close in an hour; his men have been beaten back by the mob, so there have been but ten polled there as yet to-day, therefore by four o'clock it must all be over. We are watching them well, for fear they should personate from other baronies, and have left some fellows in the booth to kick up rows, and retard the polling.

An express has just been sent off to Mr. Wilmot, to prevent his sending down any more men."

And now what shaking of hands, and wishing joy, followed this announcement, between the young Viscount, who had been since breakfast by the side of the gentle Isabel; (a delightful refuge from his noisy committee-room and his constituents.) How blandly his mother-in-law elect thanked! how sweetly his fair mistress smiled! how proud and gratified she looked! In a word, how delighted every body was with themselves and with one another. What shouts of triumph and self-gratulation rang through the house! How they did talk and laugh! what joy! what noise! what vociferation! what gesticulation! Oh, the mirth and good humour of successful Irish Electioneerers! Is there any mirth or good humour like it?"

An hour had thus passed unheeded, when Mr. Malony suddenly exclaimed, "There comes Father John! I left him in the booth, to bring me word the moment it should close. Hurrah!"

And he rushed to the hall-door, in his impatience to have all the particulars.

"When did it close?" he bawled, Father John not having yet come within speaking distance.

"'Tisn't closed at all," repeated the other.

"What then, man?"

"Opened!" said the priest.

"Opened!" repeated his interrogator, with a look of consternation. "What do you mean, Father John?"

"Why then, indeed, Mr. Malony, I mane just what I say. You know the men Lord Templemore promised us, to make up for those he gave Archer: well, 'tis by them the booth has been kept open, and they have a batch of two hundred for to-morrow, who stole in to-day, while nobody was watching, thinking the election over."

And now who can describe the rage and disappointment of Malony, and the Warringdon party, lately so triumphant, at this blight of their hopes.

"The rascal!" cried Malony, stamping. "Lord Warringdon, you must send him a challenge immediately."

"Oh, yes, yes! of course—cannot possibly be avoided!" simultaneously chimed in all the

men present, forgetting in their eagerness the presence of the ladies.

Mr. Malony found his arm suddenly grasped.

"Do you want to kill him, Mr. Malony? do you—do you?" Isabel asked, trembling with agitation.

"I do not," he quietly replied; "but I want to return him."

"I had rather he never was returned," she said, wringing her hands, "than that he should run that risk."

"My God, Miss Wilmot, I wonder at you! a sensible girl, like you, to talk in this way;—sure he isn't made of glass! he must stand his chance the same as others; but just take my advice, and go away quietly with your mother, and leave us to settle the business properly;—this is no place for you; come now, go away, like a good girl!"

"No!" she replied, "I'll not stir—I will *not* leave him to be murdered by you."

"Murdered by me!" Malony repeated highly affronted. "*That* is not exactly the way you should speak to one of your father's warmest friends, and for his sake, perhaps the

most zealous supporter Lord Warringdon has. Murdered, indeed!"

"Oh, I am too miserable to know what I am saying:" and Isabel sank on the first seat near her, looking indeed most "miserable."

Now Mr. Malony could contemplate man's blood with much more philosophy than he could woman's tears, and his heart softened directly.

"I proposed his fighting entirely to serve him, God knows! For that matter, as Lord Templemore made the promise to me, personally, I have the best right to call upon him to keep it; so now, shake hands, and don't say I want to murder him, at any rate," he added, smiling good humouredly.

"But why should it be you either; why should any of you fight; the damage is done, and you can't repair it now," said Isabel, "leave it all as it is. This duelling is such a frightful and savage custom!"

"You! your father's daughter, and be frightened by pistols? you are growing to be a disgrace to the county; and I am not at all sorry you are about to transplant yourself among the quiet English," replied Malony, laughing

He and the other gentlemen soon after withdrew, leaving the Viscount and his gentle mistress together, who, by the way, never appeared to him half so gentle or interesting as at that moment. Was it because she leaned her head so affectionately on his shoulder, and murmured forth his name with such whispering tenderness? or was it merely because he approved and admired her womanly abhorrence of duelling?

And now let us follow the movements of Mr. Malony and his belligerent companions. A second visit to Lord Templemore was immediately decided upon, and a certain Mr. Mc Carthy was deputed to remonstrate in Mr. Malony's name, on his breach of promise.

The noble Earl alleged he had kept his word.

"Yes, my Lord, but in such a manner that you have done us harm instead of good; for were it not for you, the contest would now be over," replied Mr. Mc Carthy.

"Not being aware of the politics of your committee-room, I could not possibly imagine that giving you forty votes would be an injury to your cause," replied the Earl.

Mr. Mc Carthy smiled incredulously. "Every body, my Lord, knew that our object was to close that booth. Will you give it under your hand, that you alone of the whole town was ignorant of it? and that you had no conversation on the subject with Mr. Archer?"

"My verbal assertion is sufficient, I should think, sir."

"Not in Mr. Malony's opinion, this time, my Lord," Mc Carthy retorted.

"I certainly will not give any other voucher, sir," the Earl answered, reddening with displeasure.

"Then, in that case, my Lord, I am directed by Mr. Malony to demand satisfaction for what he considers an intentional injury on your Lordship's part," said Mr. Mc Carthy.

"I have done what I promised," insisted Lord Templemore, "and I will not suffer myself to be provoked into a quarrel with Mr. Malony, because he happens to be in an ill-humour. My life is far too valuable to my family to risk it in an idle brawl, with a hot-headed young man like Mr. Malony."

"That is your answer, my Lord?"

"That is my answer, Mr. Mc Carthy."

"I am afraid, then, that such an answer will not satisfy Mr. Malony, and that he may consider himself obliged to give your Lordship a rather unpleasant proof of his opinion of your conduct," said Mr. Mc Carthy, rising and moving towards the door.

"Mr. Malony had better take care how he subjects himself to a law process," Lord Templemore observed, as he rang the bell.

His Lordship immediately discovered he had very particular business at Mount Pleasant, and was stepping into his carriage, about an hour after the above conversation, when he felt a whip gently applied to his shoulders; and looking round, beheld his broken-promise-holder, Mr. Malony.

"I don't repeat the blow, my Lord, because you are a man double my age, and I don't want to do you bodily harm; but only to degrade you, as that man deserves who does an injury underhand, and refuses giving the only satisfaction in his power. Now, take notice, all of ye," he continued, turning to the crowd of idlers assembled round the carriage, and loitering about the street, "that I have laid a whip across Lord Templemore's shoulders,"

and so saying he walked away, whistling, and tapping his boot with the said whip.

Soon after, nothing was talked of, all over the town, but the approaching hostile meeting between the flogger and floggee. Happily, however, the constituted authorities interfered, and the parties were bound over, in recognizances of a thousand pounds each, to keep the peace; and so, much to the mortification of all "whom it did *not* concern," there the matter ended.

We wish that Lord Templemore's treachery had produced no worse consequences than that of personal degradation to himself; but unluckily, through his prevaricating conduct, he had not only been the means of keeping open a booth which the Warringdon party wanted to close, but there was now a strong probability that, owing to him, a booth would close, which they wanted to keep open.

In expectation of the election being immediately terminated by the event first alluded to, the Warringdons had neglected having the necessary supply of men, to keep up the ball, in the great barony of ——; the strong-hold in fact of the Castle Wilmot interest; that

closed, all was over; they would lose two thousand voters.

And now it became the Archers' turn to laugh, and jeer, and triumph, and the Warringdons to look crest-fallen.

"Never mind, all is not lost yet," said Malony, as he and several of his party sat round Lady Anne's dinner table. "Give me the swiftest horse you have, and I start this night for Castle Wilmot. I shall be there by dawn of day to-morrow, and you will see me return with enough of your men and my own, to take the town, if we wanted it."

Mr. Malony kept his word, and by —— o'clock the next day returned, followed by hundreds of triumphant partizans, with pipers playing before them, and laurel branches in their hats; shouting "High for Derry Manogaslogh! who'll dare say the contrary?" In consequence, the booth was kept from being closed on that day, and by the next, they had so over-powering a majority, that Mr. Archer withdrew opposition, and Viscount Warringdon and Mr. Fitzgerald were declared by the High Sheriff "duly elected, as Knights of the Shire," for the county of ——."

CHAPTER XIV.

And now are not our readers as wearied of the noise and confusion of an Irish election, as our Viscount himself? We think it more than probable that they are; and therefore we will spare them the added noise and confusion of the chairing; and yet we confess we do so reluctantly. There is something to our mind, so gloriously characteristic of the Irish people, in their true, deep-felt, deep-toned, joyous, affectionate, energetic huzza for a popular candidate; and then the windows crowded with ladies, many of them young and pretty; and all good-humoured (that day at least),

waving their handkerchiefs; and the candidate looking up at them, as he sits enthroned on the shoulders of the people, and bowing so graciously, and his friends on either side of him, holding banners; and all above and beneath, and around him, shouting his name;—is there a situation in human life, more pardonably intoxicating to human vanity than this? at least to a country gentleman in Ireland, where the desire for popularity, and the sensibility to it, are so strong.

The day was closed by a grand dinner given by his friends and constituents, in honour of the new member; at which there was a great deal of drinking and speechifying; and the following evening the Viscount returned the compliment by a ball, and supper, for the special purpose of thanking the ladies of his party: and such a gay ball!—there were all the officers of the garrison at it, and two very dashing Captains of Dragoons; —a God-send by the way for which the ladies were indebted to Mr. Archer, that gentleman having applied for two troops of horse to ride down the riotous Castle Wilmots; (and Captains of Dragoons being rarities, the town of

C—— not having the advantage of being a cavalry station); they naturally attracted the brightest eyes in the room. Then there was Mr. Malony, and Mr. McCarthy, and a number of other young, laughing, dancing men of good property; and then the young member himself, all gallantry and politeness; and then the charming Lady Anne, soft and ingratiating as usual; and then Isabel, who seemed that night to tread on air, her step so bounding, and her countenance so radiant with happiness; the happiness of loving, and being beloved; and perhaps with a little vanity too; her lover was an admired and popular man, the object for the time of engrossing and flattering attention,—and a few days more, and she would be his bride!—a Viscountess too! —happy, happy Isabel.

"I never saw her looking so well!" observed the lover to the mamma, with a warmth and earnestness of admiration, almost Irish.

"Humph! the same as usual, I think,—I can't say, that I see much difference," replied the mother, carelessly.

Somebody who overheard this answer, thought it extraordinary. It is clear the per-

son whoever he, or she was, did not thoroughly comprehend our friend Lady Anne.

"Where is Miss Wilmot to-night? I hope she is not ill," said several people in the course of that evening, to the young Lady's Mamma.

"No, thank God! not at all, but she preferred remaining with an invalid friend," and Lady Anne coughed, or smiled, and ostentatiously changed the subject. Of course each enquirer either already knew, or speedily discovered, that Mr. Barham was the friend alluded to, and naturally enough concluded there must be "something in it," or Lady Anne, the pink of propriety, would never permit her daughter to remain almost alone with a young man; nor would her daughter be inclined to lose a ball, for the best mere friend she had in the world. The approaching marriage of Mr. Barham and Maria Wilmot, therefore, became buzzed about the room; some in their zeal to prove their assertions, insisting that they had the information from Mr. Barham himself; others gave Lady Anne as their authority; others Maria Wilmot, and so on, but all were sure of the fact; and the

mother of the bride-elect was overwhelmed with compliments and congratulations; but she only "assured her kind friends that it was all a mistake; that there really was no truth in the report, there was not, indeed!"

"Oh, come now, Lady Anne, there is no use denying it," said Mr. Malony, "particularly to me, for I always knew how the land lay in that quarter. Well, I wish you joy; Barham is a right good fellow; just the man to make a woman happy; a capital shot, rides like the devil, and would as soon slap a man's face, as eat his breakfast,—I wish you joy from my heart! but when is it to be?"

"We have not yet quite settled the *when*," replied the Lady, smiling.

And here we would request the reader to imagine the ball over, and permit us to end our chapter.

CHAPTER XV.

APART from all the gossip about him, would it not be an act of christain charity, to enquire what has really become, during this long interval, of our poor wounded lover of fun, now that we have a little leisure on our hands?

As he was leaving the court-house in company with Mr. Malony, the memorable morning of the duel, he was met by Lady Anne, who enticed him home with her, by promising him some capital fun at the electioneering dinner she was to give that day.

He laughed during the evening, with all his customary energy; he, and his wounded

fellow-duellist, being the noisiest, revellers, and most affectionate friends of the party. But, unfortunately he drank rather more on that occasion than was his custom; the consequence of which was, that (not being an eel, or an Irishman, and therefore not used to being skinned, or knocked on the head), before morning he was in a burning fever, roaring about fun and pistols, and requiring Pat Murphy's and Barthy Kilfoy's united strength to keep him from jumping out of the window; during his illness, nothing could equal Lady Anne's tender and devoted attention, sitting up with him, and suffering no hand but her own to smooth his pillow, or give him his draughts. Her care was, as every body remarked, motherly, and indeed, Maria also gained much credit by her praise-worthy attentions to their young guest; for as soon as he was able to move into an adjoining apartment, converted for his convenience into a temporary sitting-room, the kind Maria had always some nice little funny story, to beguile his tedious hours of recovery, seldom or ever leaving the invalid, except for a short walk, and apparently totally uninterested in the

scene of excitement which absorbed every body else.

On the morning after the ball, Mr. Barham for the first time, since his illness, joined the family at breakfast. Lord Warringdon and Isabel soon slipped away to say some more last words, previous to his lordship's threatened departure for London, with Mr. Wilmot, for the purpose of making the necessary preparations for the reception of his affianced bride, who was shortly to follow with her mother and sister; and Mr. Wilmot, who had just arrived, retired to learn from Pat Murphy, all the "ins and outs" of the election; so that of the group part assembled at breakfast, there now remained but Lady Anne, Maria, and her "invalid friend."

"And so now its over, election, chairing, and all, and I have not seen one bit of it; I, that could not sleep for a week before the poll opened, thinking of the fun I should have had,—not to have had any at all,—isn't it too bad?" asked Barham, in a tone of good-humoured discontent.

Maria and her mother agreed that it was, indeed, a grievous misfortune.

"By the way, Miss Wilmot, I was just thinking how very droll it is that your guess about a duel being my second adventure should have turned out true; is'nt it very funny? how you must have laughed when you heard I was wounded. I am very sorry I did'nt think of putting off my duel for a few days, just to see a little of the fun first,—but I was so vexed you see, at the time, that I never thought of it,—Miss Wilmot, I forget what you said my third adventure in Ireland would be?"

"To be married, I think," replied Maria, carelessly,—"was it not?"

"Oh yes, I remember; but I don't think that guess is as lucky as the other, for as I am not married yet, it is'nt likely I shall be, in the few days I remain in Ireland."

"Are you going so soon?" enquired Lady Anne, her heart sinking within her at this cool announcement. "I thought you were to wait for us, and travel together."

"Why I must, you see, whether I will, or no; Sir Willoughby Turner has written me such a blowing-up, because I stay idling here; he says, instead of being at college, reading

my course; and threatening he won't give me a farthing of money, till I return. 'Tisn't his money, at any rate, so he need not badger me so, for spending my own. I shall be so glad when I come of age, and can do as I like. And I shall be so sorry to go! I don't know what I shall do with myself, when I return to England, I shall find it so stoopid. I never, in all my life, was so happy as I have been here, nor met such good-nature. As for your kindness, Lady Anne, and Miss Wilmot's, I never can forget it as long as I live,—nursing me as if I was your son and brother. I shall very often think of you both. Will you not come soon and see me at Cralcourt? I shall be so delighted to see you, particularly Miss Wilmot; and you must not forget to bring all your servants, and try and persuade Father John to come, too! how glad I shall be, to be sure!"

Lady Anne looked over at her daughter, who immediately arose and left the room.

"Pray, Mr. Barham, may I ask were you serious in inviting my daughter as a *friend* to your house?" asked his hostess, in a tone of apparently suppressed emotion.

"Oh, yes, to be sure, quite serious; I hope you have too good an opinion of me to suppose I was not perfectly in earnest, when I invited her to Cralcourt: could you possibly imagine me so ungrateful?" he asked, with warmth.

The lady played awhile with the chain round her neck, and hemmed; at length, she said, in a constrained manner, "Mr. Barham, you have not, it seems, perceived the drift of my question."

Mr. Barham entreated her to explain; but she remained silent, and apparently, very much embarrassed, and somewhat offended.

"I am afraid I have displeased you, in some way, Lady Anne, I wish you would tell me in what."

"I will be candid with you," she replied, with great seeming effort; "I am disappointed in you."

"How,—what have I done?"

"You have acted ungenerously, very ungenerously, towards a family who deserved, from you, at least, different treatment."

"What family?" the young man asked, surprised.

"Mine, Mr. Barham."

"Yours, Lady Anne? I act ungenerously towards your family! how?"

"My dear Mr. Barham, recollect yourself, I beg."

Mr. Barham did recollect himself, as desired, but in vain. After a careful review, in his own mind, of his conduct during the two months of his acquaintance with, and domestication in, the Wilmot family, he could not charge his conscience with a single act, word, or even thought, of the nature imputed to him.

"I declare, Lady Anne," he said, after a few moments' pause, "I cannot imagine what you mean;—there must be some mistake."

"It is a mistake, then, which the whole county has fallen into, as well as myself," replied the lady, with a slightly sarcastic expression about the mouth; "for every one who saw you together, formed the same opinion."

"Saw me and whom together, Lady Anne?"

"My daughter, sir," she replied.

"And what opinion do you say they formed?" again queried the puzzled boy.

"Mr. Barham, when a gentleman pays exclusive attention to a young lady, seeking her society in preference to that of all others; and this preference continuing during months to be manifested before strangers, as well as her own family, what is the motive generally assigned by the world for his conduct?"

"Oh, people say that he is in love with her;—but why do you ask?"

Lady Anne continued:—"And if the young lady, considering these attentions in the light that all her acquaintances do, should become attached to the gentleman, giving him such proofs of her affection as subject her to public comment, do you think the gentleman would act generously, or even honourably, if, after all this, he invites the lady as a *friend* to his house?"

The light suddenly flashed on the bewildered Barham—"My goodness! surely you cannot mean *that*, Lady Anne?"

"Mean what?" she enquired.

"Mean that I paid attentions to Miss Wilmot, and that she——" he stopped, embarrassed.

"And that she is attached to you?" asked

Lady Anne, finishing the sentence for him. "Yes, that was exactly my meaning."

"But, Miss Wilmot and I never talked a word about love in all our lives,—no, no more than I and Father John did: we used only to laugh together. I never intended,——" he hesitated again.

"I cannot possibly tell what you may have intended, my dear Mr. Barham," said Lady Anne, taking him up; "all I can know is what you have done; and all I can say is that every body who saw you together supposed you were her declared lover. Do you imagine I would otherwise have permitted her to sit, for hours, by your couch, and to remain at home and alone with you, on so remarkable an occasion as an election ball? Her absence was naturally commented upon, and then there was a laugh among the gentlemen,—'Miss Wilmot, of course, had remained with her friend, Mr. Barham:' every one asking when it was to be: I replied 'that my daughter had not taken me into her confidence, and, therefore, that I knew just as much about the matter as they did.' Either you have deceived my daughter, or she has deceived me;

whichever way it is, she will now become the ridicule of all the envious misses of her acquaintance; the gay, laughing Maria Wilmot turned into a lackidaisacal young lady, condemned to wear the willow, will, of course, amazingly divert them; and, for this highly gratifying situation, she will have to thank you. Am I not, therefore, justified in saying that you have acted ungenerously towards her?"

"But how am I accountable for what people choose to say I meant, but which I did not mean?" asked Barham, naturally enough objecting to Lady Anne's forced inference.

"You don't feel any regret, then, at being, though unintentionally, (as you assert) the cause of injury to an amiable and confiding young person?" enquired Lady Anne. "I must, in that case, have, indeed, a bad opinion of you, and bitterly regret the day we ever met."

Poor Barham bit his lips, and knit his brows in painful and perplexing cogitation. He could not bear to think of his kind and merry friend, Maria, becoming the laughing-stock of her acquaintances, because she had so often

made laughing-stocks of others for his amusement, and yet he did not relish the alternative, —namely, making her his wife.

He was still hesitating, when the door opened, and Mr. Malony appeared.

"Ah! my dear fellow, how goes it?" he said, advancing, and shaking the late sufferer cordially by the hand. "I am delighted to see you out of your room, at last, and, by the way, I don't think you ever would have come out of it at all, but for Lady Anne and Miss Wilmot."

Barham's heart smote him, and he bit his lips more energetically than before.

Lady Anne made an excuse for leaving the room.

"Well, when is it to be, Barham?" enquired Malony, laying his hand on his friend's shoulder, and smiling significantly.

"I don't understand you," replied the lover, *malgré lui*.

"Why, your wedding, to be sure!"

"My wedding?"

"Oh, come, nonsense, Barham, it's no secret now, I can tell you; the whole town knows it as well as you do yourself. There

was nothing else talked of at the ball, last night:—well, I wish you joy; you could not have made a better choice."

"I wonder why he did not choose her himself, then," thought the young Englishman.

Mr. Malony continued: "A good-natured, pleasant girl, as ever lived, and devilish fond of you, she must be, to have stayed whole days in your sick room, instead of dashing about at the election, and, faith, we had a loss in her; many a man she has laughed into voting for her father:—she will keep you alive, Barham."

"But, suppose, Malony, that all this should be a mistake, and that we are not going to be married, at all; what would you say, then?"

"Why, I should say it would be very odd in you, and very unlucky for her: I assure you, that both herself and mother are commented upon already, for their imprudence about you, and nothing kept the peoples' tongues between their teeth, at the ball, but the supposition of your engagement. Oh, no,

you are too honourable a fellow for that," observed Malony.

"I am in for it, I see," said Barham to himself: he paused a moment, and then added aloud, "Well, Malony, no harm done, whatever they say, for we *are* engaged."

"To be sure, I knew you were; have you got your guardian's consent?"

"I have not yet applied for it."

"He may refuse, perhaps, thinking you too young; but you can go to Gretna, in that case, you know."

"Yes, I know," answered the "happy man."

Here Lady Anne and her daughter re-entered the room together.

Mr. Malony walked up to Maria, and, after the usual salutation, "wished her joy."

"Of what?" she enquired, looking surprised, and, for once in her life, at least, feeling precisely as she seemed to feel; for her mother's report of the conversation with her intended lover had not, by any means, prepared her for so speedy and joyous a conclusion.

Mr. Malony laughed. "Ah, you will be

Maria Wilmot, I see, to the end of the chapter. How innocent you look!"

"I really am innocent of all comprehension of your meaning, Mr. Malony," she replied.

"Confess, like the frank, honest girl you are, that you are going to be married, and not sorry for it," he added, lowering his voice into a confidential whisper.

"Well, Mr. Malony, like the frank, honest girl I am, I declare to you 'tis all a mistake, and I *am* very sorry for it," Maria answered, summoning up her usual carelessness of manner.

"All a mistake! that's just what Barham himself said, at first, and afterwards acknowledged it was no mistake at all; — there's never believing a word you lovers say."

Lady Anne fixed her examining look on Barham; he understood its meaning, and immediately advanced towards her.

"Lady Anne," he said, in a low voice, "I wish to speak with you."

They withdrew together to a window, and Barham continued:—"Malony tells me, not only that every body thinks Miss Wilmot and

I are engaged, but that she is even blamed for all the kindness she has shewn me; I need not say how unhappy I should be, were I the cause of injury to her; and so, I was thinking that we had better be married, since it is the general opinion that we ought. I will thank you to mention what I have said to Miss Wilmot."

"Certainly, my dear young friend," replied Lady Anne, in her most endearing manner: "and I need not say with what pleasure I shall receive you into my family. I must ever love and honour the manly and feeling mind you have, by your present decision, evinced."

Mr. Malony, after again shaking hands and wishing joy, took his leave; and Lady Anne ran to communicate the good tidings to her husband and younger daughter.

About a fortnight after Mr. Barham's proposal, Cralcourt received Maria Wilmot as its mistress; and, in another fortnight after that, the Morning Post announced the marriage of Viscount Warringdon, eldest son of Earl Glenville, and Isabel, second daughter of Robert Wilmot, Esq., of Castle Wilmot, in

the county of ———, late M.P., &c. Then followed a long list of the Dukes, Marquisses, Earls, and their consorts, who had partaken of the elegant d ejunè, at the splendid mansion in Park-lane, belonging to the Earl of Rochford, uncle to the lovely, amiable, and accomplished bride: and it was also further stated, for the instruction of the world at large, that the happy pair had set off, immediately after the ceremony, for Sutton Park, the seat of Earl Glenville, where they were to remain during the honey moon.

CHAPTER XVI.

Lady Warringdon was a beauty, a *bel esprit*, a leader of fashion,—was she happy?

We will answer that question by asking the reader to imagine four years elapsed since the event which closed our last chapter, and accompany us to the same London mansion in which we opened our tale, and enter with us an apartment which bears the stamp of female occupancy. The piano stands open,—the harp uncovered,—a guitar is carelessly thrown aside on an ottoman,—richly-bound volumes lie scattered about the room,—new music, albums, annuals, half-cut reviews, and

vases of flowers, intermingled in not ungraceful confusion, with the thousand little expensive trifles which a fashionable woman loves to collect around her. A lady, half-reclined on a sofa, listless and unoccupied, her eyes fixed on the fire; the blaze had caught the cheek turned to it, but the other side of her face was pale; and pale, one might have supposed, rather from late hours, than painful thoughts, were it not for the drooping attitude of her head, and the slight contraction of her brow. Her reverie was broken by a tap at door.

"Come in," she said, in a voice which harmonized with the pensive refinement of her appearance.

A handsome, fashionable - looking man entered.

"How d'ye do?" he carelessly asked, throwing himself on the couch opposite to that occupied by the lady.

"Very well, I am much obliged to you," she answered, in the same tone of apparent good-humoured indifference; but one, skilled in interpreting the inflexions of the human voice would have detected displeasure and

dislike lurking under the assumed carelessness of both the speakers.

"I wonder you did not go to hear Pasta last night, all the world was there," observed the gentleman. "Didn't you mention something about your wish of seeing the new opera, the last time I saw you?"

"Yes, I dare say I did," replied the lady; "but recollect that the last time I had the pleasure of seeing you is full three days ago; and then you, who have studied female nature so accurately, and so successfully, will not wonder at my having changed my mind."

"Certainly not—I neither wonder nor condemn; on the contrary, I consider woman's changeability as her greatest charm, as well as her highest privilege. What can be more tiresome or insipid than those women who are 'the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever'—you see I can quote scripture, my fair wife. By the way, may I ask whether your cutting Lady Seaton the other night at the Duchess of ——'s is to be considered as part and parcel of the same charming vacillation of purpose which occasioned your cutting the opera last night?"

"No;" replied the lady, in a quiet tone, but with a heightened colour; "I have cut the opera merely for a night, whereas I have cut Lady Seaton for ever."

"Indeed!" said the gentleman, brushing up his hair at the mirror, and with affected indifference of manner, belied however by the sarcastic curl of his lips. "If it be not an impertinent question, may I ask why?"

"Why?" repeated the lady, and her beautiful mouth wore the same scornful expression as that of her companion.

"Yes, why?"

The lady gave a forced laugh, and the gentleman pushed in and out his lips.

"These little airs of disdain are quite bewitching, I confess, and would, to a lover, prove absolutely irresistible, but as I happen unfortunately to be only your husband, they are thrown away upon me. May I request then that you will favour me with an intelligible answer to an intelligible question: why do you intend cutting your friend Lady Seaton?"

"*Your* friend, you mean, my Lord."

"Well, granted she is my friend, is that a

reason why you should reject her as an acquaintance?"

"Yes, a full and sufficient reason," the lady firmly replied. "If you were not always at her house, I might go there sometimes."

"All very romantic and interesting," observed the husband, yawning; "and quite in character for the heroine of a novel, or a young lady brought up by a maiden aunt, during the honey-moon; but rather too new in a woman of fashion after four years' marriage; these tender reproaches are, I must acknowledge *tant soit peu ridicules;* although it must be of course vastly flattering to my vanity, to find my lovely and admired wife still country girl enough to be jealous of me."

His cold and ironical smile was repaid by a glance of haughty indignation, as she exclaimed:

"Jealous of you? oh no! that time has long past, my good Lord. No; in my refusal to associate with Lady Seaton, I am actuated by the same motive which would prevent my continuing acquaintanceship with any other married man's friend;—respect for myself."

"But Lady Seaton is received by all the

world," Lord Glenville replied, in a tone of suppressed anger.

"Very possibly; all the world does not happen to know what I know of her."

"And do you imagine that it will be in your power to put out of society the most admired woman in London, yourself always of course excepted?" the Earl added sarcastically.

"I do not want to put Lady Seaton out of society, I merely desire to exclude her from my own house."

"As your house happens also to be mine, I beg leave to enter my protest against that decree. While she is received anywhere else, she shall be received here," said Lord Glenville, in an easy unembarrassed tone of authority.

"Then, my Lord," replied his lady, "it is fair to inform you that the day she enters your house I leave it."

"And so I must e'en take my choice between you? sad alternative! I would fain be blessed with the presence of both," the gentleman sneered.

"My God! is it then come to this?" Lady Glenville murmured.

A thundering knock at the hall-door caused a momentary interruption in the matrimonial dialogue, and a footman soon after entered the room, and announced the Marquis of Tiverton.

The lady coloured, and the gentleman smiled.

"Shew him up," he said.

"Into another room then, if you please," interrupted the lady; "I am not in tone to see company to day."

"Ah the *cavaliére servante* is never company, you know; *mais comme vouz voudrez*," he replied, carelessly. "*Au plaisir, ma belle*," he nodded, as he left the room to receive his friend.

Lady Glenville started from her seat, and walked up and down in agitation.

"And is this the conclusion of a marriage of affection? after four years of outrage and insult, to be now thrust from his house, my husband's house; the house of the man I loved;—ah, how deeply, devotedly, and until lately—very lately—how undeviatingly! My God! have I deserved this?—Have I? Yes!" she added, suddenly sinking on her knees—"Yes! for in the day of my happiness I never

bowed before Thee in gratitude; I never gave thanks for my blessings, nor prayed for their continuance. I was happy, and I cared not to enquire who had made me so. I did not even come to Thee in my sorrow. I sought consolation elsewhere for a wrung and wretched heart—sought, but never found it! My friends laughed, while I wept. From one being alone have I met sympathy; and from that sympathy, oh, my God! in mercy protect me now!"

She was still in the attitude of supplication when the door suddenly opened, and Lord Glenville and his friend entered: she arose hastily, and a deep flush of resentment and confusion overspread her face, as she glanced from her husband to his companion.

"*La belle dévote!*" exclaimed her lord, ironically. Tiverton, confess I am the happiest husband you know; 'tisn't every man who when he unexpectedly enters his wife's boudoir, need only fear interrupting a flirtation with Heaven. How interesting to find her, before whom all knees bow in homage, herself bending the knee! What a pretty subject for a sonnet! 'On Lady G. praying.' We have

plenty of verses on sleeping, singing, dancing, playing beauties, but not any, at least that I recollect, on a praying one. Now, there's a subject for your muse, Tiverton; talk it over with the fair devotee, while I go, for a minute, to Lady Seaton's," accompanying this studied insult by a glance of a strange sort of expression at his wife. It did not pass unobserved by her, for she happened at that moment to raise her eyes to his; and the colour, which had mounted to her face at his insult, suddenly left it at his glance.

"*Adieu, mon ami!* I shall meet you at five in the Park," said the fashionable husband, as he ran down stairs.

Lady Glenville had assumed her usual easy, unembarrassed manner, but although she talked of all the nothings of the day with more than her customary vivacity, it was evident to her companion, from the varying of her complexion, that her apparent spirits were the result of an inward struggle. He became abstracted, and there was a silence of a few moments, which was then broken by him.

"Something has discomposed you, this morning, Lady Glenville."

"Why should you imagine so?" she asked.

"Again at your old habit of giving a question for an answer!" Lord Tiverton said, smiling. "And yet I would not, if I could, break you of it; 'tis the natural recourse of an ingenuous mind, that will not give an untrue answer, and cannot give the true one; and, in its simplicity, imagines it has, by its artless device, baffled the curious enquirer. Ah, but you are a bad dissembler, Lady Glenville: 'you wear your heart upon your sleeve,' and you know what follows."

"Hush!" replied the lady playfully, though tears stood in her eyes. "Who talks of hearts in these days? What would become of your character as a man of fashion, if I were to say that I had heard you mention such a word?"

"Lady Glenville, something has agitated you, this morning, I am sure there has. I know you too well to be deceived. Allow me, then, the privilege of a sincere and attached friend, and give me your confidence. I may be able perhaps to explain for you, or even advise. You will at least believe me anxious

to serve you; my ability to do so, alas! remains to be proved: but such as I am, head and heart, you know that you can command me."

"I am obliged by your offer, my Lord; but there is no room for explanation—no need of counsel on the present occasion;" replied his companion. "Lord Glenville has signified to me his intention of forcing Lady Seaton on me, and I—"

"Oh impossible!" exclaimed the Marquis, interrupting her. "Impossible!—you mistake him."

"And I," the lady continued, "have signified to him my intention of leaving his house if he does. Oh no! I have not mistaken him!" she added bitterly.

Lord Tiverton rose abruptly from his seat, and paced the room in much agitation. Suddenly he stopped:—

"And when you leave Glenville, where will you go, while awaiting the preliminary arrangements for your future maintenance? Your mother is not in town, and even if she were, you know how little she is able to enter

into your feelings—your virtuous feelings—of what is due to a wife; then your sister—"

"I know all you would say, my Lord," interrupted Lady Glenville. "I do not require to be reminded that I stand alone in the world," she added mournfully.

"Alone in the world!" he exclaimed, taking a seat near her; "no, not while I remain in it!" And then lowering his voice into a whisper, "there is one house at least which would open wide to receive you, one heart, where you would be enshrined, worshipped; a heart consecrated to you alone; one, I will not say worthy of you, but at least more worthy than his who would prefer a Lady Seaton to you. Try a new fate—you are unhappy—neglected: try a new fate, beloved Isabel!" he murmured tenderly, endeavouring gently to unlock one of the clasped hands between which her head was buried.

She withdrew her hand, but it was cold and trembling; and when she looked up at him, her face was deadly pale.

"Leave me, Marquis of Tiverton!" she said, slowly and solemnly. "We can never meet again. Leave me, my Lord," for he still

hesitated. "Leave me at once, and for ever; I know you at last!"

She rang the bell. "I wish your Lordship good morning," she added, as a servant attended the Marquis to his carriage.

"Ah, Glenville! were you demon enough to plan this!" Isabel exclaimed, when once again alone. "Oh yes! yes—I read it in the cold, heartless triumph of that glance—that parting look. Yes! Glenville you *were* demon enough to plan this. You, my husband my protector, who vowed before God to love and to cherish me. You would have betrayed me to degradation. And is this plotter against the honour of his own wife the man who was once *my* Warringdon; the man I worshipped, alas! more than ever I did my God! I am punished. My idol has fallen; and it has crushed me, even while I knelt before it! And now the last frail reed on which I leaned for human sympathy is broken. Tiverton, too, plotted against me—the tempter who offered balm for the throbbing, tortured heart, and, behold! the balm was poison! Ah, Marquis of Tiverton, you are revenged. When you were only George Damer, with a thousand a

year, you loved me, and I was inclined to love you, but my mother! Ah, no! I will be honest, with myself at least. My own ambition, my own worldliness whispered, I might do better, and I listened to those bad counsellors, and stifled my growing attachment. You are revenged, Tiverton;—I love you now. Ay—to my own conscience, and to my God, I will confess that grievous, sinful secret. The woman who, from ambition, would not allow herself to love you, when her love would have been virtue, now that she has attained all which in her worldliness she coveted, would give up all and follow you, were you again George Damer, and she Isabel Wilmot, over the world!—And the woman who says this is now the wife of another! Are you not revenged, Marquis of Tiverton? and is not my punishment, oh, my God! greater than I can bear, though not greater than I deserve!"

The footman who entered about an hour after Lord Tiverton's departure, found his Lady lying on the floor, in a state of insensibility. She was carried to her own room, and the next morning was in a brain fever, attended by three physicians, and the papers rang

with a recent matrimonial *fracas* in high life, and of the consequent dangerous indisposition of a lovely Countess, and the *not* consequent despair of her noble Lord.

CHAPTER XVII.

Much to Lord Glenville's disappointment, his lady did not die, although she had three physicians, and, as soon as she recovered consciousness, a clergyman, attending her.

"She must feel herself going, since she sends for a clergyman," thought her loving lord. A month passed, and Lady Glenville was still confined to her room, but able to sit up for a few hours. Her own woman brought her the cards and notes of enquiry, left during her illness; the greatest number of both were from the Marquis of Tiverton.

"The Marquis, my Lady, used to call four and five times a day, to ask after your

Ladyship," said the woman. "I don't think he was very well himself, either, my Lady; he was looking so pale and wan, you would hardly have known him, my Lady;—every body was remarking it."

"Indeed! I am sorry to hear it, Edwards; and have you happened, by chance, to learn how he is now?" enquired the lady, struggling for composure.

"Oh yes, my Lady, he is now pretty well again: I saw him yesterday, and he desired his best compliments to your Ladyship, and begged I would hand you this note."

Lady Glenville's first impulse was to refuse receiving the note, but she recollected how strange this would appear to the woman, she took it, therefore, and broke the seal with trembling fingers, and a beating heart; the characters were evidently traced in haste and agitation, and they ran thus:—

"Your woman tells me that you are, at length, able to sit up, and are recovering strength. You are nominally the sufferer, and yet I have suffered more than you:—you lay, happily, insensible to either bodily or mental anguish, while I felt for you all that you did not feel for yourself: I bore your

and my own weight of trouble at the same time. You have banished me from your presence, Isabel, but I cannot banish you from my heart. In a few weeks I shall leave England:—I have some idea of a journey overland to Persia. I require to break new ground; and, as it is possible, in my present state of health, that I may never return, will you allow me to see you, for a few minutes, before I depart?"

"No, no, no!" murmured the lady, (she had previously disembarrassed herself of Edwards' presence) I must not, I dare not again meet you, Tiverton. No: it would be a presumptuous tempting of my fate. No! when I was, as I thought, dying, I prayed to be enabled to root out of my heart my sinful love for you, and I am sure He heard me; it may not be done in a month, nor even a year, but, with His help, it will be done before I die, at least. Oh, I trust, I trust it will! No, Tiverton, although you are leaving, and, perhaps, for ever, your native land, I will not see you. No! although in losing you, I lose the only human being who cares about me, for you *do* love me, I believe, as well as

man *can* love: but it was love still, it was something to cling to, and—"

Edwards here bustled into the room.

"I have good news for you, my Lady."

"Good news for me?" repeated Isabel, pensively.

"Lady Anne is just arrived in town, at Lord Rochford's, and has sent to know if you can see her. She has travelled all the way from Rome, post haste, on seeing the accounts in the papers, of your Ladyship's illness."

"Thank God!" exclaimed Lady Glenville, bursting into tears. "That was like a mother! Oh, my mother! this is very good of you."

In a few minutes afterwards, Lady Anne entered her daughter's room. The mother's countenance was nearly as tranquil as usual, while her child lay almost convulsed, from contending feelings, in her arms.

"Dearest, dearest, mother, you pity me, do you not?" she murmured. "Oh! I know you do, for you have come to me, when every body else deserts me You love your poor Isabel still! Oh, yes, still, still:" and each

broken sentence was accompanied by a fresh burst of tears, and a closer embrace.

"My dear Isabel, pray compose yourself, do, my sweet child;—agitation is so bad for you in your present delicate state. I shall be obliged to leave you, if you are not more tranquil; I shall, indeed, my love, that's a dear girl. So, sit down, and we will chat a little together. And now, my dear Isabel," continued Lady Anne, when her daughter had recovered her composure, "do tell me what this quarrel with Glenville is really about. I have read and heard such various versions of it; all agree, however, in blaming you as precipitate and *exigeante*. Now, my love, let me hear your story."

Isabel recapitulated all the circumstances of which the reader is already in possession. Lady Anne listened very composedly to the recital, and when it was ended, asked

"And is that all you have to complain of, my love?"

"All?" repeated her daughter.

"My dear Isabel, is Glenville the only inconstant husband in the world?"

"My dear mother, he is not; but he is

the only man who would force his wife to receive his——"

"Oh nonsense, my dear, why could'nt you take the matter as quietly as Lord Seaton did?"

"Then, in my place, you would have received her?"

"Certainly,—sooner let her in, than put myself out,—it is not too late yet. Your uncle Rochford has sounded Glenville, and on your agreeing to receive Lady Seaton, he will overlook your hastiness, and—"

"Never!" interrupted Isabel,—"never—never,—will I live under that man's roof one hour longer than I can help;—"*he* overlook *my* hastiness!" she exclaimed, starting up in indignation; "he, the tyrant and traitor!—the smiling, polite tyrant,—and base, cold-blooded traitor!—*he* talk to *me* of forgiveness! Listen to *me*, mother: suppose I were mean enough, nay, and vicious enough, to assosiate with Lady Seaton; suppose I would forget and forgive, on her account, aye, and on account of other outràges and insults, heaped upon me, and boasted of to my very face, for the last three years,—I never can forget, or

forgive, his devilish project of *that* day; when he goaded me to madness, and then drove me to the brink of a precipice,—God! and does my mother tell me I should live with a demon like this?"

"My dear Isabel, you agitate me as well as yourself," replied the tranquil Lady Anne, "by all this vehemence. I give you my opinion, and that of every body who has heard the story,—and I most earnestly recommend you to consider well what you are about, do not, I implore you, give way to temper, in this crisis of your own fate:—you are now at the head of a splendid fortune, you have rank, fashion, beauty, every thing this world can offer; dearest child, thousands envy you the brilliant lot you are about to cast away in a moment of caprice; my sweet Isabel, be persuaded by me! what will a few hundreds a year be to you, accustomed to thousands?—and the world will be sure to turn its back upon you when you are only *poor* Lady Glenville. Oh, dear child, you will find a terrible change in people then!"

"Oh, I have not now to learn what the world is made of," answered Isabel, I am dis-

gusted with it." After a pause she continued, "as my uncle Rochford offered to *intercede* for me with Lord Glenville, perhaps he would have no objection to confer with him relative to a respectable maintenance. I ask no more, and even that much with reluctance; I would fain owe him nothing," she added, sighing.

"And where do you propose living?" asked the mother.

"When I leave my husband's house, will it not be natural to return to my father's?" asked Isabel, timidly.

"My dear Isabel, if your husband had really turned you out, your father's house would open to receive you, but as you voluntarily quit the man you have vowed to love, and honour, I cannot, according to my conscience, support you in your defiance of duty to God, and respect for the world. I never will receive again,—at least under such circumstances, as an inmate, a daughter I have married well."

Isabel's lip quivered; and her heart sickened, but she made no reply. Lady Anne soon after left her daughter, to return to dinner at Lord Rochford's.

Lady Glenville took up the pocket-bible that lay near her bod-side, and chanced to open it at the words,—"When my father and mother forsake me, he taketh me up."

She threw herself on her knees, and wept bitterly.

CHAPTER XVIII.

A travelling carriage stood, some days afterwards, before the door of Glenville House.

A lady, very pale and thin, descended the steps supported by two gentlemen, and followed by a female attendant. She was handed into the carriage by the younger gentleman.

"You have a fine day for your journey," he remarked.

"Yes, very!" she replied.

"I believe all is now ready," said the elder gentleman. "You have not forgotten anything Edwards?"

"No, my Lord, nothing."

"Then you had better set off, or you will

not reach Canterbury till late. Good bye, my dear Isabel," and he touched coldly the pale cheek of the traveller.

"Good bye, dear uncle, and many thanks and apologies for the trouble you have taken about me."

"Glenville," she added, extending a hand to the other gentleman, "I wish you well," and her voice slightly faltered.

He smiled, and nodded. The footman, after having closed the carriage door, mounted the box, the coachman touched his horses, and the carriage was soon out of sight.

The travellers stopped for the night at Canterbury. And Lady Glenville was lying on a sofa near the fire, gazing on the bright flame, in one of those fits of abstraction, in which we have before surprised her; one arm still fair, but no longer rounded, lying listless by her side, and the other holding a small volume, when the door opened, and a waiter entered, to inform her that a gentleman, on very particular business, wished to see her. Before she had time to reply, a tall man, wrapped in a cloak, stood in the door-way. Scarcely looking at him, she motioned him to a seat,

quietly awaiting an explanation for this intrusion.

"You are much changed, Lady Glenville," the stranger observed.

Isabel started at the sound of that voice, and now gazed intently on the speaker; she gasped for breath, and her head drooped on her shoulder. When restored to consciousness, the first object which met her eyes was that of a well known figure kneeling by her side. At first her gaze was vague and bewildered, like that of one awakened suddenly from a dream; then it became earnest and searching. "Why have you come here?" she asked.

"To see you."

"To see me!—But have I not already refused to be seen by you? what right have you," she added, making an effort to recover her self-possession, "to force yourself thus into my presence?"

"What right have I? the right of affection, Lady Glenville. Isabel look at me! am I not changed too,—aye, as much as yourself, since last we met? and why am I thus changed? because of my love for you. When

you became ill, I became ill,—when you suffered, I suffered, and you ask me, as you would a common acquaintance, what right I have unbidden to enter your presence,—what right!" he repeated vehemently.

"Is it generous to pursue me thus? I appeal to yourself, Tiverton, is it?"

"Well, why did you refuse to see me before?—why, tell me why?"

"Because I never will voluntarily find myself a second time in the company of the man who had once before insulted me."

"Insulted you, Isabel! but we will not dispute about the justice of that rather harsh term; granted however, that I had insulted you on a former occasion, you had not to fear a repetition of the offence, as I had previously intimated my intention of leaving the country, perhaps for ever, and I merely requested permission to take leave of you; and yet that humble request you refused, and you tell me your motive for so doing was resentment for my previous misconduct; but, Isabel, that was not your motive; the reason you refused to see me, and the only one was, because you doubted yourself."

Isabel's hand was on the bell, when it was caught by Lord Tiverton. "You will only make a scene, Lady Glenville, for I warn you that the first man who enters the room I will thrust out of it. I am determined you shall hear me, and then a word from your lips will be sufficient to dismiss me: was it not so before? your womanly pride and dignity are up in arms,—I know they are, against my audacity for presuming to think, much less to say, that you do not abhor me as you try to persuade me and yourself that you do. It might, perhaps, have been better policy to have appeared a more humble adorer; but I wish to lay bare my whole heart to you, defects and all, and then, Isabel, decide whether that heart deserves to be cherished, or trampled on!

"In one respect, at least, you will allow, I differ from the many admirers by whom, during your married life, you have been surrounded; I had loved, and sought you, as Isabel Wilmot; I did not wait to see you the property of another, to discern your merit. Others bowed down before Lady Glenville, the idol of fashion; but I loved the woman in which I discovered those qualities now are so

eagerly proclaimed by all, when she was as yet but a young aspirant for notice. I saw where, and how, and why, she differed from the throng of bold or vapid fashionable accomplished candidates for brilliant establishments, which thronged the ball and concert-rooms. I saw, and loved, the simplicity, and yet acuteness, of her mind, the truth, the affection, the spirited, yet gentle nature,—her polished vivacity, her deeply feeling heart. I spoke to her of a retirement in a remote, but beautiful part of England, of the happiness and utility of a country life; of the interest of a home, where affection and intelligence preside,—but Isabel, your mother had already spoiled the fair materials entrusted to her; worldiness had even then crept into that young heart, and stifled its generous impulses. Shame! said I to myself, on the woman who rejects a true love, because it comes not encircled in a coronet, or shines not with the tinsel of fashion! From that hour I became a changed man, dissipated, almost heartless. I went abroad with my regiment, years passed away, I heard of your marriage with Warringdon, and I confess, heard it with perfect indiffer-

ence;—so, thought I, she has at length attained the object of her ambition.

"Not very long afterwards, I unexpectedly succeeded to a title, and returned to England. I saw that you devotedly loved your husband, and you began to rise in my estimation, but I also very soon perceived that you were neglected by him, and in consequence unhappy. You then immediately became an object of unworthy speculation to others; and I admired the easy contempt with which you treated their pretensions,—I insensibly fell back on my former feelings for you, but I was guarded in the expression of them; you will admit that I never passed the prescribed bounds, till the day Glenville left us together. When he banished you from his house, I offered you mine. I offered you myself too, my fortune, and my name, you rejected all, and dismissed me from your presence, and then, Isabel, I looked upon you not merely as the most engaging woman I had ever met, but as one to be worshipped for the energy of character which, in the midst of sorrow and insult, could remain firm to the stern command of duty, and could courageous, spurn

the tempter, though he came in the form of the man you loved, for I knew you did love me. I heard that you were ill, dangerously ill; in agony, I waited the result,—you recovered,—I begged to see you—and you refused, I ascertained the day of your departure for Dover, and I set off, and awaited your arrival in this town," he paused.

"And what good do you propose either to me or to yourself, by this step?" asked Lady Glenville.

He was silent a moment. "Isabel, when first I declared my love, you did well to reject it; for it was not then perfectly worthy of you, besides, you were not then assured of its sincerity. And again, there still remained a hope of accommodation with your husband, you had still a mother, relations, friends, acquaintances,—you had much, much to give up; but now you are separated from your husband; you are censured by your friends, deserted by your acquaintances, abandoned even by your own mother. You are going abroad on an income of six hundred a year, alone, you have no child, or interest in life.

Isabel, what is the world, or the world's

laws to you? Have you not already known and felt its nothingness? Of all those who fluttered about you, in the sunshine of your existence, who is there that comes to cheer you now, or bring hope and consolation? the brilliant Lady Glenville is forgotten by all but one, the man who loved her even in her childhood, seven years ago: ought not that man to be more to you, than a heartless worthless would, ought he not, Isabel?"

"Yes! more, much more than this world, with all its honours, and all its splendors, would you be to me, if this world were all that stood between us;—but there is one thing dearer to me than the world's opinion, my own self-respect, and there is one Being dearer to me than you,—and that being is my God. Oh, had I known him earlier, I should have been spared all I suffer at this moment, for the feelings I now sacrifice in obedience to his will, in that case, never could have arisen, or at least, never have abided in my heart."

"Do you then reject my love, my sincere, devoted, unchanged, and unchangeable love? do you indeed prefer going alone through the

world, Isabel? and is the wretchedness I shall endure, nothing to you, Isabel,—think again! and well, before you doom me and yourself to a life of misery."

"Tiverton, have you ever read this book?" she asked handing him the little volume that lay by her.

"I cannot say that I have."

"Well, when you have read it, and carefully read it, and after you have prayed over it, come to me again and ask why I doom you and myself, to a life of misery.—Tiverton; if you had read that book, you would not have come as a tempter to the afflicted. Go travel, as you propose, think, and above all, pray, and then return to your country, and marry;" her voice here faltered for a moment, but she recovered her composure and proceeded. "But let not your wife be the daughter of a worldly mother."

"And now," she added, holding out her hand, "I will bid you farewell."

But he still lingered.

"Nay, 'tis useless, Tiverton, my mind is made up! God bless you, and forget me."

"Would I could!" he replied; in a voice

hoarse from emotion,—"but that can never be!—No, I love you as I shall never love again; I honour you as I never honoured before! No, Isabel, I can never forget you!"

He pulled his hat over his brows, and, almost dashing her hand from him, left the room.

Isabel sank back on the sofa, where she lay some time so pale and motionless, one might have almost doubted that she breathed, were it not for the low stifled sob, which at intervals escaped her.

The next day, Lady Glenville had a relapse, and was unable to proceed on her journey.

CHAPTER XIX.

And now will the reader travel with us to Paris, and, having been set down in the Rue Castilione, enter a *premiére* lighted up, and filled with company, composed of all that is distinguished by rank or talent, among the various nations of Europe;—poets, politicians, artists, mathematicians, generals, philosophers, and foreign ambassadors, he will there find assembled. Nor is the attraction of beauty wanting to complete the animation and embellishment of the rooms; and each lady has her little circle of admirers; but the largest group of this kind is, strange to say, formed round the plainest woman of the company;—

it is fair to state, however, that she is also the hostess.

Almost every sentence she utters is followed by a laugh, or a bravo! from the gentlemen by whom she is surrounded; as she turns from the Frenchman to the Italian, from the Spaniard to the German, and addresses to each, in his own language, a few words, which are either sportive, profound, or enthusiastic, according to the pursuit and turn of mind of her auditor; and yet, while charming those around her by her wit, or her eloquence, there is in her manner, at least, no attempt at display, no consciousness of power. She is brilliant, indeed, because she cannot be otherwise; and would have been equally so by her own fire-side.

A gentleman, who had just entered the room, advanced towards her.

"Well? have you found him?" the lady asked, in a low hurried tone.

"Yes! after a long search, I have at length traced him to a café, in the Palais Royal, where, for the last three days and nights, he has been drinking and gambling with a set of low English blacklegs. I represented to him

the cruelty of leaving home, for days, without having previously announced to his wife his intention of absenting himself; and I tried to persuade him to return with me, but I am sorry to say, could not succeed."

"And what motive did he give? what answer?" enquired the lady.

"Oh! the usual answer to all argument, all entreaty!—a laugh."

The lady bit her lips, and looked thoughtful for a moment, but only for a moment; she quickly resumed her usual carelessness of demeanour. "Come, Sir Robert, give me your arm into the music room."

A few minutes afterwards, a voice of extraordinary power and compass, of thrilling expression, and clear and rapid execution, filled the apartments, and called forth on every side bursts of applause, even from professors of the art.

"What an uncommonly clever woman that is!"—observed a young man, to the gentleman that the lady of the house had called Sir Robert.—"But what is the reason, Turner, that Barham never appears at his wife's parties?—it looks odd, people say they don't live

well together; that he thinks her ugly, and she thinks him silly; but nobody that I know has ever seen him. I understand he keeps odd company; your father was his guardian, was he not?

Sir Robert bowed.

"Well, you ought, in that case, to be able to tell something about him?—Is he really a fool?"

"His wife has certainly somewhat the advantage of him in point of intellect," answered Sir Robert, drily.

"I admire your caution, Turner," said his companion, smiling. "Singular, too, considering your position in the *ménage*."

"How do you mean?" asked Sir Robert.

His companion again smiled. "So you have never heard what people say of yourself, and the English Corinne here? of the brilliant wife and accomplished friend of poor silly Barham?"

Sir Robert Turner fixed his eyes steadily on the speaker.

"There is one subject, upon which I never permit a jest, and that is, when a lady is concerned. The first person, therefore, that

you hear talking of Mrs. Barham, in any way but that of admiration and respect, refer him to me," and he immediately turned the conversation.

No one, throughout the evening, could have guessed from Mrs. Barham's manner, as she sang, danced, or talked, that her spirits were disturbed.

At length, much to the regret of all but the lady herself, her rooms began to thin, and finally, of all the guests, none but Sir Robert remained.

"Will you come with me to the café, where he is?" she abruptly asked;—"I will speak with him myself."

Turner, greatly surprized, endeavoured to dissuade her,—but she insisted, and accordingly they drove to the café.—He alighted, and entered the house, where, after remaining about half an hour, he returned to the carriage, without Barham.

"I cannot induce him to come to you;—I fear he is utterly lost," he said in a tone of sorrow.

Maria jumped out of the carriage.

"Shew me the way to the room where he is," she said hurriedly.

"My dear Madam, you are not surely going among those fellows! It is not a scene fit for a lady."

"The worse they are, the greater the necessity of getting him away from them," she replied.

"But it will be in vain; nothing you can say will make the slightest impression on him, pray do not think of exposing your feelings to this useless travail, he has become quite implacable of late."

But Mrs. Barham insisted, and he led the way; having opened the door of the apartment pointed out to her, she stood a moment on the threshold, to try and distinguish her husband among the group of coarse, slang-looking men, by whom he was surrounded. His face was flushed, and his whole manner that of a low foolish profligate, playing, and losing, and alternately laughing and swearing vehemently at his ill fortune.

Mrs. Barham had approached near enough to touch her husband's elbow, before he was aware of her entrance, so completely absorbed was he by what was passing at the table.

He turned suddenly round, "Ah, is that you? What brings you here?"

"Come with me, for a moment, to the door," she replied. "I wish to speak a few words with you."

"Well, don't keep me long, then, for I am very busy just now," he said, following his wife out of the room.

"Barham, why have you not come home for three days?"

"Because I did not choose it," he replied. "I had a mind for some fun;—do you think I am going to ask your leave, whenever I may like to have a lark?"

"Why not at least tell me where you could be found? Why leave me for days uncertain what had become of you?"

"And if I had, Turner would have been after me, dogging me every place I went. He thinks because his old father kept me in leading strings once upon a time, that I am going to let him do the same now, but he will find himself mistaken."

"My dear Barham, I do not want to keep you in leading strings, I assure you," observed Turner quietly. "I merely offer you advice

which you are at liberty, of course, to accept or reject, as you please; but which, for the sake of the old friendship subsisting between our families, however ungraciously you may receive it, I shall continue to offer. I can have no object in view but your own welfare."

"Aye, aye, I believe as much of that as I like," replied Barham, with a loud laugh; "that is always your gammon, but I am not such a spooney as you take me for."

Turner shrugged his shoulders contemptuously. "Well, my good fellow, though you will not listen to my advice, will you listen to your wife?"

"Thank you! I am not going to make a Jerry-Sneak of myself, I can tell you that for your comfort. No, no, I am my own master, and I'll do as I like; so let her keep her advice for somebody who wants it. At Cralcourt she badgered me because I had a few running horses, and betted a little; and because I had hounds, and used to like a bit of fun with my grooms and huntsmen; and now I am here, she keeps poking at me, because I dine with a few friends. Ever since I married it

has been the same thing; she is always finding fault, whatever I do; and for that matter, she has no right to do so—"

"No? has not a wife a right to remonstrate with a husband?" asked Mrs. Barham.

"Yes, if a man marries out of his own head; it is all very well then. One may bear a little teazing, when one has brought a trouble upon oneself—that is all fair enough."

"What do you mean, Barham? I don't understand you," said Turner.

"Ah, she understands me," he replied, doggedly.

Turner glanced at Maria.

Could the woman he now saw standing humiliated, as a wife, before a drunken fool, be the same brilliant, animated, self-possessed, intellectual creature, that had dazzled a circle of accomplished judges?

"My God! what a fate for such a being!" he said to himself, as he observed her colour rise, at her husband's taunt. Maria had, however, too much habitual command over her feelings, to notice the speech.

"Well, my dear Barham," said she, "I

have listened to you; will you now attend to me?"

"Yes; but don't make a long preachment of it, for I want to go back to my friends."

"You accuse me of badgering you," Mrs. Barham continued, "but how was that? have I ever used an unkind word, or even an impatient one? Have I, Barham?"

"I don't say you have; but you were always reminding me that I ought not to do this, that, or the other; advising, advising, from morning till night, instead of making me laugh, as you used to do. I did not marry to go to school, you may be sure. You were always telling me what a pleasant house you would keep, if I would but come to Paris;—well, I did, and you crammed it with clever people, and then wonder I don't like to stay at home!"

"Well, dear Barham, then there shall be no more clever people at the house, if they keep you away from it. Can I say more than that? and, in turn, all I request of you is, merely this:—to ask to your house, not to a café,

whatever company you please: or, at least, to tell me, when you leave home, how long you intend remaining absent. Is that fair, or not?"

"I told you before, I have a mind for fun, sometimes," replied Barham.

"Well, and cannot you have the fun at home?" enquired his wife.

"Oh, no, I can't:—what fun can one have with a wife stuck up near one? Oh, no; you go your way, and I go mine, and we shall always agree very well."

"But, Barham, your way is leading you, fast and sure, to ruin. You cannot have fun without money,—what will you do when it is all spent?" asked Maria.

"Oh, that time is a good way off, yet," he replied, laughing.

"Not so distant as you think," continued his wife. "Remember what you owed before you left England, and how much you are losing every night at play, and——"

"Oh d——n it! there you are, again, at the old story!" he exclaimed, bursting impatiently from her, and returning to his party.

"Oh, why did I marry a fool!" exclaimed Maria, throwing herself into the carriage. "My God! to think of being tied for life to a creature like that! a creature that cannot be made even to feel for himself! and *I* to be obliged to bend low to *him!* to be obliged to suppress my indignation at his insults, and my contempt at his folly, in order, if possible, to keep him within bounds! My unfortunate child! what is to become of her?"

"What other woman could have sustained herself at all, under such a fate?" asked Sir Robert; — "how I do respect and admire you!"

"Respect and admire!" Maria repeated with bitterness: "Oh, no, you despise me;— you would despise the woman who merely consented to marry a fool because he was rich; how much more must you despise her who planned and plotted to marry him! Barham spake but the truth when he said he never wanted to marry me. I deserved the taunt, and, therefore, I was obliged to bear it patiently, humbly. Ah! little does the world know, while I talk and laugh, how I writhe under the deep, deep humiliation, the unutter-

able and innumerable mortifications of my lot! Insulted by a creature I despise; married to a man I am ashamed to acknowledge! You will wonder, perhaps, why I go into the world, at all, under such circumstances: but I should lose my senses if I did not, sometimes, force my thoughts into another direction. Besides, when in society, such as that of to-night, I forget that I am Barham's wife, I feel a momentary triumph in the mind which enables me to rise above the degradation,—the contemptible position that, at other times, bows down my spirit to the earth. And, then, the remorse I feel! the remorse, when I think that, had Barham married some pretty girl he liked, he might have turned out differently: to think that I have the wreck of his fate to answer for, as well as my own miserable accountability!"

"And is this the woman the world represents as unfeeling?" exclaimed her companion, half aloud.

"I cannot wonder that it should," observed Maria, "for I long thought that I was so myself."

"But I never did," said Turner; "I judged more favourably, and, as it has proved, more correctly, of you, than either yourself or the world had done. I early saw that your nature had been disturbed, and put out of its place; that you had been so often told you had no sensibility, and had been so carefully instructed to glory in your callousness, as a proof of the superiority of your understanding, that you had, at length, become temporarily, owing to your tuition, the worldly-hardened character your teachers persuaded you that you were, from original disposition. But I could not believe that one, so beloved in her neighbourhood, of whom I heard so many acts of charity, kindness, and generosity, could be wanting, essentially, in a feeling heart. No, I could never believe that possible, and I was right. I never could believe that God would have given such an intellect without giving a heart, too; you were not merely intended to dazzle, but to bless also; you were intended for a higher and a better vocation than the one allotted you by your mother."

"And yet, perhaps, she was not so much to blame, after all," observed Maria, "according to the opinions she held; for, intent as she was upon marrying her daughters well, and seeing me unattractive in person, and, therefore, unlikely to succeed, as it is called, unless pushed forward, she found herself necessarily compelled to stifle my sensibility, lest it should interfere with my judgment, and prevent my taking proper measures to secure a good 'establishment.'"

"And so you married Barham because your mother persuaded you that you were not a woman to be loved? My God! if we had but met sooner!" he continued, seemingly affected.

The carriage just then stopped at the door of her house, and Mrs. Barham also appeared agitated.

"I over-heard your exclamation," she said.

"And it has offended you?" he asked.

"I will be candid with you in all things; —no, it has not offended, but it has grieved, me, because I must no longer meet you as I have done."

"Forget what I said,—it escaped me unin-

tentionally, I solemnly assure you,—forget," replied Turner.

"I cannot forget any thing you ever said, Turner," replied Maria; "besides, I have been already informed that we are commented on; yet, while I felt there existed no grounds for censure, I was reluctant to give up the society of a tried and valued friend, because fools talked, and I therefore deferred, from day to day, coming to a decision. I have always had too little respect for the opinion of others, but——"

"But," interrupted Turner, "if you saw no necessity this morning for our separation, why should any thing I have said to-night cause you to alter your opinion? You do not judge of me as a mere man of the world, I hope, nor of yourself as a giddy woman; why may we not meet as heretofore, I promising never again to express a vain, and, what is worse, a criminal, regret, with regard to the past, and you undertaking to forgive and forget what has been said? I do not ask to be allowed to come as often to your house as formerly for I am aware my visits have

been remarked, and I had intended, in consequence, withdrawing myself, in a degree, from your society;—you will allow me, however, will you not, occasionally, to see you?"

"Better not, for some time, at least," replied Maria. "It is not that I think so badly of you, or so meanly of myself, as to *fear* you; but it subjects to a strong and disadvantageous contrast one that I am bound, as much as possible, to regard, and will make my duty still more irksome than it is. I shall leave Paris for a few weeks; meantime, persuade, if you can, poor Barham to play and drink less, and, when I return, you will probably be setting out for England;—Good night, and God bless you, till we meet again."

Turner was silent for a few moments, and the usually calm expression of his countenance became disturbed. "You are right," he said, at length, and turned from the door.

Maria hurried up stairs to her own room, and thence to an adjoining apartment. She noiselessly approached a bed, where a child lay asleep, and which was calling, in uncon-

scious fondness, through its slumbers, on its mother.

"My darling!" she exclaimed passionately, "your mother is near you. Pure, innocent creature!" she continued, kneeling by the bed-side, while tears trickled down her cheeks, "you first taught me that I had a heart! my child! my all, in this world! the only being that loves me, and that I love, except——, but, hush, I must not even think of *him*, *here*, by *her* bed-side. And yet," she continued, unwittingly pursuing the very train of thought she had, the instant before condemned, "is it my fault, if I love him? against a brilliant, or insinuating, man of the world, I should have been upon my guard; but how could I be prepared for the gradual, scarcely perceptible, influence of active, undeviating, intelligent goodness, of generosity, disinterestedness unbounded, and unostentatious benevolence? how could I imagine that there was sin, or danger, in esteeming one, whom his equals honoured, and the poor adored? And the first prayer that I ever uttered from the heart, was it not at his suggestion, when my child was ill? Oh! if I had been his wife!

Three months after I quitted Ireland, with Barham, he came into our neighbourhood!—but no, the woman who could sell herself for gold was not worthy of a better fate! I do not complain,—I deserve it all, and more."

CHAPTER XX.

A MONTH passed, and Mrs. Barham returned from her tour. Several letters had arrived during the interval, but which had not been forwarded, from uncertainty as to her address, in her movements from place to place. Among the number now laid before her was one of an old date from her mother, informing her of Isabel's quarrel with her husband, and of her approaching separation; throwing the whole blame, as was to be expected from her tone with Lady Glenville herself, on her daughter, announcing her firm determination of leaving her, for the future, to her whims and absurdities, and mentioning her daughter's appeal to her protection, and her refusal.

"She shall have mine then!" exclaimed Maria. "Isabel, you wronged your sister, when you did not write to tell her that you wanted a home;—yes, for, even in my most selfish and hardened days, I should not have given you the answer your mother gave. Oh, I wish I had received this letter before; Isabel will think me so barbarous never to have taken any notice of her all this time;—and now where will a letter reach her? for, according to the date of my mother's communication, she must have already left Glenville House,—and ill too,—poor Isabel!" and she was sitting down to write to her sister, under cover to Lady Anne, when a letter, just come by the post, was handed her. It was from Edwards, Lady Glenville's woman, informing her of her sister's illness at Canterbury, and that her Lady having strictly forbidden her communicating the intelligence to her mother, she dared not disobey her commands; although very uneasy at so heavy a responsibility resting upon herself alone: she therefore took the liberty of letting Mrs. Barham know Lady Glenville's dangerous state, and begging her instructions how to act.

That evening Maria and her little girl were on the road to England.

Notwithstanding all the precautions which tenderness could suggest, to prepare Lady Glenville for a meeting with her sister, the agitation had nearly proved fatal to her.

"You will live with me, will you not? my own dear Isabel?"

Lady Glenville leaned her head on her sister's bosom, and for some moments neither of them spoke.

"Yes!" Isabel replied at length, "*if* I live it shall be with you, Maria. I wish I had known you sooner and better. I should not have been thrown on the dangerous sympathy of another. I never did you justice, Maria!"

"A great change has come over me," said Maria, "since we were girls together, I have learned to feel—the great barrier that used to separate our minds is removed. My character has been softened, and yours strengthened, by the few years of our married lives. We can now be, what we never were before,—sisters in heart! counselling, sympathizing friends!—On *one* subject only we will never speak, because it is one we must not even think upon."

"True," replied Isabel. "But to keep a constant and effectual watch over our thoughts we shall need assistance. Do you ever pray, Maria?"

"No, but I will;" her sister answered pressing her hand.

"Your child shall be mine; we will educate her together; and God grant she may have a happier fate than either of her mothers!" said Isabel, throwing her arms round her adopted child.

CHAPTER XXI.

We will now pass over five years, and beg the reader to return once more to Wilmot Castle. Lady Anne and her husband are sitting together.

"Now, is not that ridiculous? Maria, of all people upon earth to set up for sentiment! She marries a man she cares nothing about, because he has a good fortune. Well, he loves his fortune—his estate is sold—he goes mad out of a fit of drunkenness, and the world won't persuade her to send him at once, quietly, to a proper place of confinement. 'He would be treated cruelly,' she says, so she insists on taking care of him herself. To

talk in that way, she must be as mad as he is: I have not patience with such nonsense—is it not provoking, Wilmot?"

"Why, as Maria has patience, I think we may. I am only sorry she has such a misera-ble lot!" replied the father.

"And Isabel encourages her in the scheme —applauds it of all things. Such an account as Rochford gives of them!—he was down in their neighbourhood some weeks since,—it is really melancholy to think of it—they are be-come regular Methodists!—teach charity chil-dren their catechism, and make flannel petti-coats for old women! My dear Wilmot, I am really astonished how you can laugh at such conduct."

"Why, my dear Anne, I think that they are, of the two, better employed even in 'making flannel petticoats for old women' than in flirting with young men. By the way, who was it that Tiverton married?"

"Lord knows! some nobody or other he chose for her piety. Rochford wrote me word. I never thought much of his sense,—but, however, I am sorry now I formerly discou-raged his addresses to Isabel; yet how could

I foresee his uncle and three cousins would die, and make him a Marquis? I did all for the best, however," said Lady Anne with a sigh.

"Do you know what would have been better than 'doing for the best,' as you call it, my dear Anne?"

"What?" asked his wife.

"To have done nothing at all."

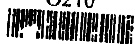
Lady Anne paused, and then said, "You are right."

THE END.

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